



Find your inner peace at Hengshan Mountain

Page 21



A hundred years on stage

Pages 12-13



Crawl the centipede street cafes

Pages 16-19



Transvestite Swede duo to debut

They've tried their hand at other styles, but Stockholm-based duo Koop says electronic jazz is where they belong. The band will debut in Beijing at the Star Live on September 5.

Page 4

Photo provided by Star Live

好运北京
GOOD LUCK
Pre-Games sports special
The 'Good Luck Beijing' series

Pages 5-11

China tells its tourists no shouting

Page 3

A biologist's musical for wildlife protection

Page 4

Malaysia Week to launch in Beijing

Page 4

Chinese students to talk with ISS astronauts

By Huang Daohen

Chinese middle school students will, for the first time, talk directly to the astronauts in the International Space Station (ISS) via amateur radio this Sunday, the Nanjing No 3 Middle School recently announced.

Contact with US astronauts in space is part of the Amateur Radio on the International Space Station (ARISS) program, which aims to raise student interest in science and technology through firsthand experience with the NASA space program.

Wang Long, the teacher in charge of amateur radio activities from Nanjing No 3 Middle School, said that NASA has posted the activity as part of its agenda, and said the activity is scheduled for around 6:40pm Sunday.

Twenty student representatives with selected questions will be able to participate in the activity.

Students will have a ten-minute talk with the US

astronauts in the ISS. NASA astronaut and flight engineer Anderson Clayton will use the amateur radio in the International Space Station to talk to students.

"Can you see the Great Wall from the ISS?" "Can you hear anything from space?" The school has invited everyone to submit questions for the astronauts this month, and selected 20 which involve space problems, flight and the life of an astronaut.

The school's principal said they applied for ARISS membership in April 2005. Since then, ARISS has assigned special representatives to visit the school for detailed inspection.

ARISS, started in 1996, is an educational program to help design, build and operate radio gear to connect ISS crew members to students on Earth. ARISS is sponsored by the American Radio Relay League (ARRL), the Radio Amateur Satellite Corporation (AMSAT) and NASA.

Five directors explore China's border

By He Jianwei

Five Chinese directors have started a trek which covers 20,000 kilometers of districts along China's border as part of a Discovery documentary series on the unique landscapes, culture and history of the region, Monday.

The directors are award-winners from Discovery First Time Filmmakers (DFTF). The series will premiere as five 30-minute films on the Discovery Travel and Living block in early November, Chang Fang, vice president of Discovery Networks Asia and general manager of Discovery China, said.

The production teams led by the five directors will track and record five expedition teams traveling the border. The expedition will cover Ruili, Yunnan Province, Yanji, Jilin Province, Dunhuang, Gansu Province and Lhasa, Tibet, and explore 40 counties and cities in 15 days.

The teams will explore snowy mountains, deserts, seas, prairies, wildlife, mysterious and ancient geographical formations, and the culture and history of the broad areas.

"I am excited to work on this production-the scale is huge, and I expect to explore the history of the China-Burma Road, the Tengchong Warfield, the ancient Tea-Horse Road and the Golden Triangle Area along the borders of Thailand, Burma and Laos," Liu Chang, one of the directors, said.

"The borders between China and Russia and between China and North Korea have remained mysterious over the last hundred years. We hope we can bring the audience a new understanding about this area," Dylan Xu, another director, said.

"After four years of the DFTF Initiative in China, Discovery has discovered and cultivated some very talented potential filmmakers. They built up their experience by working with Discovery and have established themselves as leading directors," Chang Fang said.

The five teams will complete their productions and meet back in Shanhaiguan to begin post-production for the five films' premiere in November.

Car control reduces the capital's air pollution

By He Jianwei

The municipal government's tests to reduce pollution by slashing road traffic from August 17 to 20 were a success, an official from the environment department said Tuesday.

The test results clearly indicate that limiting the number of motor vehicles on the roads had a positive effect on Beijing's air quality, reducing air pollutants by 15-20 percent and maintaining level 2 air quality-an air pollution index between 50-100 for all four days, Du Shaozhong, deputy director and spokesman for the Beijing Administration of Environmental Protection, said.

Du said that, on Tuesday, when road traffic returned to normal, the sky was clear and blue, but the air quality was only at level 3 with the air pollution index at 116.

Although we could see the blue sky on Tuesday, he pointed out that a blue sky does not equal good air quality. True "blue sky" days have to be backed up with a matching air pollution index.

The quality of air during the four days is suitable for the sports event, and they have learned more about how to guarantee air quality during next year's Olympic Games, he said.

He attributed the accurate measurement to two factors - ideal weather that was not conducive to air pollution dispersion and city residents' cooperation in keeping as many as a million vehicles off the roads.

For four days, the capital restricted the number of motor vehicles on the roads, based on license plate numbers. Cars with odd-numbered license plates and even-numbered ones could only operate on alternate days.

Various research organizations, including the Beijing Environmental Monitoring Center, the Chinese Academy of Sciences, Peking University and Tsinghua University, were involved in administering the numerous tests and employing various scientific methods in order to ensure accurate measurements.

Olympic art test expo



A sculpture of Sergey Bubka, a retired Ukrainian pole vaulting star, is on display as part of the five-day 2007 China Art Exposition in the China International Exhibition Center, which will end Sunday.

The exposition, featuring sculptures, paintings, calligraphy and handicrafts, will also serve as a qualifying test for artists, to see who will take part in next year's Olympic-themed China Art Exposition.

CFP Photo

Equestrian gets financial backing

By Huang Daohen

Alex Hua Tian, China's Olympic equestrian hopeful, is now one step closer to becoming the first Chinese rider in the Olympic eventing competition after landing a 30-million-yuan (US\$3.8 million) sponsorship last Friday.

Beijing Today reported about Hua Tian on July 6, when the rider, registered by the International Equestrian Federation, began his search for the right steed. At the time, an anonymous businessman was said to be his benefactor.

Last Friday, at a press conference held at the People's Hall, Guangdong businessman Jiang Fengcai announced his sponsorship of the 17-year-old equestrian.

"I feel proud to have the opportunity to support Hua Tian," Jiang said. "It took me half an hour to make the decision; the young man's talent and passion won me over."

According to Olympic rules, riders and horse owners must come from the same country. Hua Tian and his family were searching desperately for a Chinese horse owner until Jiang came forth.

"I am luckier than any other rider, since in Britain, only a few top riders can receive such sponsorships," Hua Tian told the press conference. The Eton schoolboy appeared before local media for the first time.

"But since I am the only Chinese citizen [competing for the Olympic eventing qualification], I was able to get sponsored and go to the Olympics much easier," he said.

Hua Tian can now afford the mounts needed to fulfill his dream of competing for China in next year's Olympics. The biggest challenge ahead is to find the proper horse and get used to it before next year's qualifications.

"My aim for the 2008 Olympics is to qualify, and I will consider anything more than that a bonus," Hua Tian said. "After that, I plan to finish my studies at Eton and go to Oxford."

Brief news

Unprotected sex spreads HIV

Unprotected sex was responsible for half of the 70,000 new HIV infections recorded in 2005, topping the infection cause list for the first time since 1989 when the country reported its first case, according to the latest annual report released this week by the Ministry of Health and the China Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

In-vitro fertilization in capital

The Chinese Ministry of Health (MH) has approved 95 hospitals across the country to perform in-vitro fertilization, including the surgery to implant a fertilized egg. Seven Beijing hospitals, including Beijing Obstetrics Gynecology Hospital, Peking Union Medical College Hospital and Beijing Jiaen Hospital have been approved, the MH announced this week on its website.

(By Jiang Xubo)

Gov to let investors buy overseas shares

Hong Kong (Reuters) – The Chinese government announced Monday that it would allow mainland Chinese citizens to invest in the Hong Kong stock market, the most significant move, to date, by the central government to dismantle barriers that prevent citizens from making international investments.

The country still has many restrictions on movements of

money in and out of the mainland for anything except payments associated with exports and imports, but Hong Kong, a British colony before 1997, allows money to flow in and out of its financial markets without restriction.

By making it easier for Chinese investment to leave the mainland, the government hopes to offset some of the money pouring into the mainland through

corporate investments and China's soaring trade surplus.

The State Administration of Foreign Exchange, which manages the country's US\$1.33 trillion in foreign exchange reserves and is under the control of the central bank, announced the new policy in a statement on its website.

The administration characterized the new policy as a trial effort, but did not specify how

long it would last and did not say when it would begin.

The proposal allows Chinese citizens to open accounts at the Tianjin branch of the Bank of China, and then sell yuan and buy Hong Kong dollars without limit for the purpose of buying shares in Hong Kong.

Chinese citizens will also be allowed to use their foreign currency savings to buy shares

in Hong Kong, using the Tianjin branch.

Chinese citizens will need to show their national identity cards, and transactions will be monitored for signs of money laundering, the State Administration of Foreign Exchange cautioned. Previous regulations had allowed individuals to transfer up to US\$50,000 in a single day to Hong Kong on a limited basis.

China tells its tourists no shouting

Beijing (AP) – China's advice to its citizens who travel abroad: no fighting, no shouting and, please, no extortion.

The new guidelines for Chinese tourists, posted on the Foreign Ministry's Web site this Tuesday, cover a wide range of dangerous or problematic behavior to help head off trouble.

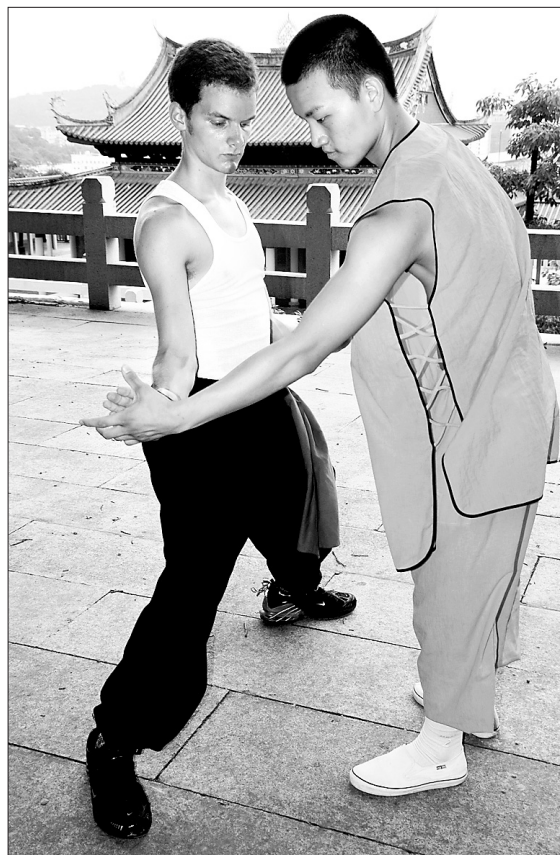
Travelers are told to avoid drawing attention to themselves, respect local customs and keep a wary eye on strangers.

"Keep peaceful in public places, don't talk loud and avoid sticking out," the guidelines said.

The suggestions also urged Chinese people to respect local laws and not to try to cut corners or make threats.

With the country's economic boom, Chinese tourists have become a major presence in recent years. The number of Chinese people who travel outside the country each year is expected to nearly triple to 100 million people by 2020.

A Kungfu day in Shaolin Temple



15 Canadian Kungfu enthusiasts paid a visit to Quanzhou South Shaolin Temple in Fujian Province on Tuesday. There they learned Shaolin Wushu, often known as a martial art, with the monks.

CFP Photo

Death penalty for damage to grid

Beijing (AP) – The government says it will execute people who sabotage the country's electricity supply, reversing recent steps to reign in widespread use of the death penalty, Xinhua News Agency reported this Tuesday.

Under a new legal interpretation by the Supreme People's Court, death can be ordered in extremely serious cases where people are killed or injured, Xinhua reported.

Executions can also be ordered when direct economic losses exceed US\$131,500, when power is cut for six hours or longer, affecting industrial production or more than 10,000 households, or where there are "other serious consequences that endanger public security," Xinhua reported.

Those causing damage to power supplies through negligence can also carry a sentence of up to seven years in prison, the report said.

The order follows recent attempts to reform application of the death penalty, which is frequently applied for a broad range of crimes from bribe-taking to murder.

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Biologist's musical advocates Tibetan wildlife protection

By He Jianwei

A musical for children, adopted from an American biologist's fairytale, was staged Thursday night at the Forbidden City Concert Hall accompanied by a French percussion concert and told the story of wildlife conservation.

The musical, called *The Good Pika*, originally was a fairytale written by American expert, George Schaller, and alerts people to the protection of a bear-like animal living on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. Percussion Clavier de Lyon Concert is credited for the music in this presentation.

Schaller works with the Wildlife Conservation Society, which is based in New York and has offices in Beijing and Shanghai. For many years, he has done wildlife research, cooperating with local units on the Tibetan Plateau, particularly in Qinghai Province and the Tibetan Autonomous Region.

"If you walk across the grasslands of the Tibetan Plateau, at elevations of up to 5,000 meters, you often meet a small animal. It has cute little eyes, rounded ears, fuzzy



George Schaller shows a picture of pika.

Photo provided by Conservation International

body, no tail and is known as the plateau pika. It's called 'abra' in Tibetan and 'shutu' in Chinese," Schaller said.

People often have the wrong perception of the pikas. "They say pikas eat grass, dig holes underground and do nothing but damage to the grasslands," he said.

"I wanted to educate people in the towns, tourists or anybody who wanted to learn a little bit about the natural community of the Tibetan Plateau, the plants and animals, and how they interact, so I started to write a book last year hoping to change people's ideas," he said.

It is interesting that, in North

America in the western grasslands, they have an animal called the prairie dog which is a little rodent. It once accumulated in huge numbers and the government decided that it was harmful and must be poisoned.

But "scientific research discovered that it actually does valuable service to the rangelands, just like the pika," he said.

After decades of eradication by federal, state and local governments, devastation from disease, poisoning, recreational shooting and habitat destruction, prairie dogs are rapidly disappearing. More have been exterminated than remain, inhabiting only about two percent of their former habitat.

"So we have similar situations in the US and in China and I think we can learn from each other," he said.

He also hopes his book will be published not only in English and Chinese, but also in Tibetan. "I hope it will reach the herder families, everything from children to adults, whose life is linked to the rangelands and wildlife," he said.

Malaysia Week to be launched in Beijing



Traditional Malay dance

Photo provided by Malaysia Embassy

By Chu Meng

To commemorate the 50th Anniversary of Malaysia's Independence and, in conjunction with Visit Malaysia Year 2007, the Embassy of Malaysia in Beijing will host "Malaysia Week" with a spectrum of performances, demonstrations and exhibitions, at Shangri-La's Kerry Centre Hotel, Beijing (Mall, Level 1). The opening ceremony will be launched on August 27. Event days will take place between August 28 and 31.

Happenings throughout the five days leading up to Malaysia's National Day on August 31 will highlight the nation's political, economic and social development, multi-ethnic society, artistic and cultural heritage, and promote Malaysia as a key tourist destination in South-east Asia.

The Operafest Children's Choir will greet visitors with songs from Malaysia during Malaysia Week. The choir has won great honors in music festivals in Wales and the Netherlands.

The Malaysia Embassy Cultural Troupe will present traditional Malay dances daily. The troupe, comprised of more than 30 professional dancers, have performed at a wide variety of events and art festivals throughout China.

Modern and traditional Malaysian art in the form of Batik, sculpture, painting and ceramic will be featured during Malaysia Week, including demonstrations in technique by artists from the Art Gallery of Universiti Teknologi Mara Malaysia.

Get the best Malaysian food in Beijing from the booths of six participating Malaysian restaurants during Malaysia Week. Daily food demonstrations, including the making of "teh tarik" (tossed tea) and "roti canai" (kneaded light pastry), will take place.

The kid's coloring contest will be held at 4pm, August 28. An outlined picture of Malaysia and crayons will be provided for all contestants. First prizewinner goes home with a cash prize of 1,000 yuan! Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis.

Policemen from 14 countries have a soccer match in town



Policemen from Ukraine won the eighth international police indoor soccer game from Monday through Thursday.

Photo by Hao Tao

Sweden's duo to debut at the Star Live



The Koop brothers

Photo provided by StarLive

By He Jianwei

Koop, a Stockholm-based electronic jazz duo, will showcase their latest album and make their debut in Beijing at the Star Live on September 5.

The band, which consists of

Magnus Zingmark and Oscar Simonsson, has done three albums in the style of jazz, down tempo and trip-hop since their first album *Sons of Koop* was released in 1997. The band has also been involved with numerous remix projects, including a remix of the the Astrud Gilberto classic, "Here's That Rainy Day."

When listening to Koops music, it's easy to believe that it's played by a small orchestra, but, in fact, the music is based on samples. All the drums, strings, horn sections and choirs are actually sampled. One thing, for sure, that isn't sampled, is the vocals.

When playing live, Koop

transforms into a 7-9 piece swing orchestra including one or two singers, and their main mission is to make people move their feet.

Simonsson and Zingmark met at a students club in their hometown of Uppsala, north of Stockholm. "Magnus was deejaying and I was playing in a jazz quintet," Oscar Simonsson recalled.

Then they became friends and decided to create music together, mixing Jazz with Debussy. "That track was picked up by a small record label in London and that was the start," Simonsson said.

"We create jazz music," Simonsson said, "It's as simple as that. We can't do pop, electronic,

techno or whatever because we're just no good at it. Knowing this and having accepted it, we can basically do whatever we want. If we want to explore and pick up pieces from, say, 1929 - we can."

The name of "Koop" is short for cooperation. "Maybe I was the one who came up with it," he said.

In this band, Magnus and Simonsson do everything together. "We spend lots of time together, discussing and creating music, and that's how a band should be," they both said.

They are excited about their first trip to Beijing.

"We want to make people dance," Simonsson said.

Britain majestic in regatta, China needs to improve

By Han Manman

With the last three final medal races of 11 sailing classes held yesterday, wrapping up two weeks of Qingdao International Regatta, the final Olympic test event of 2008 the Olympic Sailing Competition brought down the curtain.

The British team was the big winner and bagged four of the 11 gold medals as well as scoring two silvers to dominate the regatta.

The Australian sailors followed with two gold medals and two silvers and a bronze, while New Zealand eventually secured one gold and two silvers.

Chinese windsurfer Zhou Yuanguo won a silver Wednesday

in the RS:X Men's (windsurfer) final race, the only medal the Chinese team received, finally giving locals some joy.

Zhou ranked first in the previous six races and could have won the gold if only he had placed fourth. However, he placed ninth and ended up second in the overall rankings.

Zhou said after the race that the wind was pretty strong in the final, which is something he was not used to. "My biggest problem in this race was that, technically, I am not up to par with the other competitors. My start was OK, but I started to fall behind about three minutes into the race. I still have

a lot of preparation work to do if I want to compete in next year's Olympics."

Zhou said the Chinese team has yet to decide who will represent China and participate in next year's Olympics and the Chinese team has a very fair plan for selecting. "I am very glad to compete with them to decide who will represent China next year. They are younger than me, but I think I'm stronger in terms of experience."

Chinese sailing team leader, Yao Xinpei, said the final race showed Chinese players technical skills still have a distance to go against the world's strong opponents. The players need to increase

their focused training in the following year to fully prepare for the Olympics.

"In the first half of this year, we went on a training program in Europe and participated in world-class events. From these events we have learned a lot from the Western competitors."

"From here on, we still need to learn advanced skills and accumulate competition experience by participating in international events, and inviting foreign coaches to tutor our teams said Yao. "We still have a long way to go to catch up to the first-class teams. But as long as we keep learning, we will be among the top in the future."



Promising Chinese sailor Zhou Yuanguo.

Photo by Zuma Cui

Chinese baseball is on the rise



China lost the 2007 International Baseball Tournament final 2:5 yesterday evening at the Wukesong Baseball Field. Xinhua Photo

By Jiang Xubo

The Chinese Baseball National Team is on the rise and will become the No. 1 team in Asia, coach Jim Lefebvre said during the six-day Good Luck Beijing International Baseball Tournament.

"Japan, South Korea and Chinese Taipei are the top teams in Asia, but now China has arrived, and our goal is to become the No. 1 team in Asia someday," Lefebvre said.

Lefebvre, an infielder for the Major League Baseball (MLB) Dodgers for eight years, started coaching in China four years ago when the country approached the MLB about fielding a baseball program for the 2008 Beijing Olympics. He manages the team with former major league pitcher, Bruce Hurst.

China has witnessed this year its first four players sign-

ing with an MLB team within one month.

Pitcher Liu Kai, 20, and catcher Zhang Zhenwang, 19, signed with the New York Yankees in June with minor contracts. They were followed by Wang Wei, 29, and Jia Yubing, 24, who joined the Seattle Mariners at the end of the month.

"It is good for them to have an opportunity to compete with other players in the US on a higher level," Lefebvre said.

All four MLB-contracted players, except Wang Wei, who is still abroad recovering from an operation, took part in the trial event.

China won all their games against the Czech Republic and France in the test event with overwhelming scores, the exception being the games against Japan. Jia

Yubing produced two homers in the event.

"He is the most outstanding player on the Chinese team. And he works well with his teammates," Otahara Ryuta, Japanese pitcher, said after the first game against China.

Though the gap between China and Japan "is narrowing," as Wan Chao, Chinese pitcher, put it, Chinese players have a long way to go.

"They need to get stronger, play more competitions and gain more experience," Lefebvre said, "And through test games we can determine who can play and who can't."

In the states, players usually play 162 games in one season, while Japanese players do 144 and Koreans play 130 games. In China's Baseball League, players usually play less than 40 games per season.

China wins women's wrestling 59kg final

By Chu Meng

Chinese girl Li Songni beat American rival Pailla by 2:0 to bring home the first gold medal for the Chinese wrestling team yesterday night.

Another three gold medals of Women's Free-Style 44-51-67kg went to Russia and America.

Medals for the Men's Greco-Roman wrestling 50-60-74-96kg and 55-66-84-120kg in the 2007 Junior World Wrestling Championship, also known as one of the Olympic test events of "Good Luck Beijing," have found their owners.

The Greco-Roman wrestling 55kg final was held Wednesday, and Chinese wrestler Wan Feilong was runner up after losing the final to Bulgaria's top wrestler Kostandinov Alexandar.

In the first round, Wan made a fatal error when countering his opponent's attack. In the second round, he scored three points for the win. During the final, the two wrestlers ended up in a seesaw. When Wan started to gain, he lifted Kostandinov off the mat for a moment. The referee stepped in to assign Wan a three point penalty for putting his rival in danger - a penalty which cost him the match.

US officials praised the Chinese team for its rapid progress. "The Chinese wrestling team achieved encouraging results on

the second day," Gary Michael Abbott, spokesman of the America Wrestling Federation, said.

Abbott said his main job is to provide media service for the Junior World Championship. China sent four young wrestlers to compete in four events on the first day, but none made it past the preliminaries. "The 2007 Junior World Wrestling Championship is the highest junior wrestling competition, bringing together numerous top wrestlers. It isn't easy for China to win a medal here," he said.

The China team bounced back on its second day. Zheng Pan entered the semifinals of the 66kg event and Wan Feilong made it to the finals and had a shot at the gold. "China has shown rapid progress in only a couple days - it's awesome," Abbott said.

The 2007 Junior World Wrestling Championships were held at the China Agricultural University Gymnasium from August 21 to 26. The championships have attracted 600 wrestlers from 60 countries and regions to compete for 24 gold medals. China sent 24 wrestlers to all the events. As one of the higher-profile events in "Good Luck Beijing," it involved over 50 International Federation of Associated Wrestling Styles (FILA) officials and 100 FILA technical officials.



Zhang Fengliu was beaten by his Russian rival in the Women's Free-Style 67kg final. Xinhua Photo

Slovakia becomes the biggest winner in slalom

By Huang Daohen

Slovakia was the biggest winner last Sunday as it picked up both the men's canoe double (C2) and women's kayak single (K1) gold medals in the Canoe/Kayak Slalom China Open held in Shunyi district.

Slovakian twins, Peter Hochschorner and Pavol Hochschorner, finished the two outings at the C2's semifinal and final in 204.45 seconds, ahead of the French athletes.

The double champions at the Sydney and Athens Olympics led the way into the semifinal and final by completing an almost perfect performance at last Saturday's heats and semifinal the following day.

"We feel great today. The final is even 0.8 seconds faster than the semifinal," Peter said at the press conference after the race. "However, we have no plans to celebrate our success just yet as we will soon be

busy preparing for the world championships in September and the Olympics after being qualified."

Slovakia's Jana Dukatova won the women's K1 gold medal last Sunday, but appeared unsatisfied with her performance.

"I made some mistakes," she told the press conference after the women's K1 race. "The water is fast. The water course is hard, especially for female athletes," she added.

"I hope I can win the gold medal here at next year's Games, but first, I have to pass the qualifying events," said the world second-ranked Slovakian.

When asked about reasons for her success in the competition, she said that it is a combination of good training, a good coach and good luck.

European athletes dominated the competition by winning all four gold medals.



Peter Hochschorner and Pavol Hochschorner

CFP Photo

American wins men's BMX final



Donny Robinson
CFP Photo

By Annie Wei

Donny Robinson, 24, rode to victory in the official BMX Olympic Test Event on Tuesday with a time of 36.949 seconds.

Robert de Wilde from the Netherlands ranked second and Jared Graves from Australia placed third.

The two-day competition was intense, with all top riders from 25 countries on a newly-built, high-tech track for the Olympic Games next year.

For the elite women's contest, Shanaze Reader from UK, Anne-Caroline Chausson and Laetitia Corguille from France won first, second and third respectively.

Reader won the elite women's contest with 36.923 seconds – the runner up was more than

one second behind her.

For Robison, it was a huge victory after he was eliminated in the quarterfinals at last month's world championships. For the other three American riders, Mike Day, Kyle Bennett and Steven Cisar, who ranked top three in the qualifying round on Monday, their luck in the finals wasn't so hot.

Mike Day, a BMX fan favorite for his amazing performance on Monday, lagged in the semis, and Robinson came in 16th. "It's the way that BMX is," Robinson said. "It takes skill and technology, and also a lot of luck."

"The track is an Olympic standard," Robinson said. "I was there for three weeks and got used to it, but some athletes only arrived last Friday."

Robert de Wilde from the Netherlands said, "I started pretty well, but some mechanical problems with my bike slowed me down and I had to push hard to finish. It was very tired and hot, and it was a really tough competition."

Jared Graves from Australia came in third and was ranked sixth during the qualifying round. Graves is also an excellent mountain biker.

A hundred men and 42 women joined in the qualifying round on Monday, which saw 20 injured.

Korean archers scoop up all the gold medals

By Zhao Hongyi

Though the 2007 Beijing International Archery Tournament has just finished half of its schedule and is still waiting for the men's and women's individual medallists to compete, the Koreans grabbed all the team gold medals this week.

In the recurve women's team event, South Korea's Park Sung Hyun, Choi Eun Young and Lee Tuk Young out shot the Russians by 218-211 and took the gold medals easily Tuesday.

The US team captured the bronze medals as expected with a score of 211-210 as the Georgians shot an incredible five points with the last arrow.

The South Koreans were so strong that they held remarkable

leads in their four rounds against their rivals, 16:8, 8:4 and 4:2. The girls were not hiding their great desire to capture Olympic gold next year.

"Yes, we are ready to go," Park Sung Hyun said to media at the press conference after the final.

The American girls went into overtime with each archer and shot one more arrow with the Georgians.

The Georgians had led the game throughout the whole contest but lost one point on the last arrow earning them only five points.

Through the loudspeaker it was announced that the two teams had tied up the game and must play overtime. One minute later, the big screen displayed the official final results: 211(USA)-210(Georgian).



One of South Korean archers, whose team won the gold medal.
CFP Photo

Italians win men's mass road race

By Gan Tian

Italian rider Gabriele Bosisio won the Men's Mass Start Road Race in the road cycling event last Saturday, with a time of 4:27:14. His teammate, Vincenzo Nibali, took the bronze 47 seconds later, putting Italy on top in the competition.

"The team helped me finish the course," he said. "My teammates worked with me, and we won a good result. I thank them wholeheartedly." Stefano Piccolo, one of Italian team officials, also stressed that the riders focused on teamwork at training.

The official mentioned that it is still not settled who will represent Italy in the Beijing 2008 Olympics. They will hold a qualification race next year.

Alexandr Dyachenko from Kazakhstan took the silver medal at 4:27:17, and said he was satisfied with the result but would train harder.

Australian Cadel Evans, who ranked second in the 2007 Tour De France overall, placed fifth in the Men's Mass Start Road Race. On Saturday, he was disappointed and left the course immediately after the race ended. However, in the next day's Men's Individual Team Trial, he took the gold with a time of 32:28.92. Teammate Michael Rogers fell behind at 32:52.66 to take home a silver medal. Alexandr Dyachenko, who ranked second in Mass Race this time, got the third.

"Getting to ride the course under race conditions is an advantage," Evans said. "Seeing and experiencing such a diverse culture is also comforting." Evans flew to Europe for training and competition on Monday morning.

The Good Luck Beijing 2007 International Road Cycling Invitational Race is one of the Good Luck Beijing Series Sport Events, which is listed as 2.2 races in Union of Cycling International (UCI) Calendar.

China makes medal breakthrough in Kayak Slalom

By Huang Daohen

Chinese female kayaking paddler, Li Jingjing, won the bronze medal in the "Good Luck Beijing" Canoe/Kayak Slalom China Open last Sunday, marking China's first medal in the event.

Li won the medal with a result of 225.11 seconds in the kayak (K1) race held in Shunyi Olympic Rowing-Canoeing Park in the northeast-

ern suburb of Beijing.

"I made some mistakes near the end of the second round, but I'm so happy to have won the medal," said Li after the race, "and I hope I do even better in the near future."

However, Li stressed that the water is rapid and the course is hard for the paddlers. "Although this was the first time I competed in an international canoe/kayak slalom tournament held in China, I felt quite at ease, with so many spectators supporting me throughout the race," she added.

Talking about her German coach Valik, she said, "As Valik has just come to China, we still argue a little. With the passage of time I think we'll be able to find out what's best for both of us."

Li Xin, team leader of the Chi-

nese national canoe/kayak slalom team, hailed Li's third place as a "historic breakthrough," although admitting that there was still much room for improvement.

This time, China sent a team of 15 athletes to take part in the four-day race. "I am rather satisfied with their performance and the results," Li said at a press conference.

British Ruler of the waves Ben Ainslie - rule Britannia!



Ben Ainslie

Photo by Zuma Cui

By Han Manman

For all sailors who participate in the men's singlehanded dinghy, or Finn class, race, Ben Ainslie from England is their nightmare.

On Wednesday's finale, the two-time Olympic gold medalist and winner of four World Championships added another gold to his collection.

Although Ainslie did not perform well in the final, coming in seventh place, it was enough to land him a gold - his second in Qingdao in his first Olympic-class race since the 2006 test last August. He topped the charts with an eight-point lead over second-place Pieter Jan Postma, Netherlands.

"I had a terrible start in today's race," Ainslie said. "Luckily, I was able to dig deep and crawl ahead. Some players capsized in today's race, and some went over the starting line." He said Croatia, who came very close to winning the gold, cap-

sized near the end. "I finished in seventh place, which was good enough for me to take home the gold."

"This regatta has given me a great boost in confidence," he said. "I am very happy with my performance this week. I sail very well right now, but still have a great deal of room for improvement."

This 30-year-old sunshine "boy" is very popular in the sailing center. Young female fans are always itching for a photo opportunity with him. "It's rare to see an Olympic champion as handsome as Ainslie," a lady in his entourage said.

Ainslie started competing in the Finn class in March 2002. Before that, he won a gold in the open singlehanded dinghy, the Laser class, at Sydney 2000. At age 22, he was already a double-world and quadruple-European champion in the event, not to mention his Laser silver in the Atlanta Games when he was 18

Iowa Olympic Ambassadors work as BOCOG volunteers

By Chu Meng

Among hundreds of volunteers sweating in China Agricultural University Gymnasium for wrestling in the 2007 Junior World Wrestling Championship, three boys were very distinguished by their fair hair and skin.

They are American volunteers from the University of Iowa, US, who are working as flash quote reporters for the organizing committee.

Nathan Cooper, a journalism and American studies major, Marcus Schulz, a journalism and international studies major, and Michael Stout, a journalism and English major, traveled to Beijing for ten days in August as part of a Beijing Olympics "test event" organized around the Junior World Wrestling Championships.

Emily Doolittle of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Elizabeth Tuttle of Excelsior, Minnesota, both journalism and international studies majors, will work at another trial event in October in conjunction with an international tennis competition.

A Memorandum of Understanding in July signed by the University of Iowa and a partner school in Beijing, Tsinghua University, gave University of Iowa students the opportunity to work as media volunteers at the Beijing 2008 Summer Olympics and Paralympics. The University of Iowa became the first outside of China to sign such an agreement.

The two institutions reached an agreement with the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG) for training at least 23 University of Iowa students to work as media volunteers at the 2008 Summer Olympics and Paralympics.

The students will serve as reporters and writers on the front lines of the Olympic News Service, which provides continual coverage of all events for use by the international media, with English as the primary language. French will be the second official language and Chinese the third.

"It's pretty exciting to be the pacesetter," Judy Polumbaum, professor in the UI School of Journalism and Mass Communication of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, who organized and obtained support for "The Iowa Olympic Ambassadors Project," said.

"The agreement came about through focused efforts of many people in Iowa and in Beijing," Polumbaum said. "It represents a commitment to cooperate at a very basic level to make a global event a success. More importantly, it's a fantastic opportunity for our students to broaden their cultural horizons while sharing their energies in a common cause with other young people from all over the world."

So far, 23 students, most majoring in journalism, Chinese studies, international studies and health and sport studies, have signed up. Many have been preparing for the Beijing experience for the past year or more through their studies and extra-curricular work, Polumbaum said.

Three of them, selected as representatives by the entire group, made this advance visit to the Good Luck Beijing Junior World Wrestling Championships to gather information and train their classmates in the US.

Leading up to the departure of the group, Polumbaum is organizing a conference on the Olympics and global journalism, to be held on the UI campus March 7-9, 2008.

Tallest, oldest and most-times in the Olympics

By Han Manman

In this boat race, three players are the most eye-catching: Marc Pickel, from Germany, the tallest sailor, 57-year-old American John Dane, the oldest player, and Peter Bromby, the four-time Olympian.

The giant among the sailors, Mark Pickel, standing 1.96 meters tall, qualified in Germany for the Olympics in the Star Class and has met the criterion to represent Germany at the Olympics. Pickel, however, is waiting to see if any other German teams place among the top five at the European or World Championships next year. If so, there will be a German sail-off at next year's Holland Regatta.

Pickel said compared with Yao Ming, he's still pretty short. "When I was four years old, my parents let me touch the sail boat. Maybe years of holding the sail against the wind have had a stretching effect on my body."

Dane participated in his first Olympics campaign in 1968, years



From left to right: Marc Pickel, John Dane and Peter Bromby
Photo by Zuma Cui

before most of his fellow competitors were born.

In the US, winning the Trials means winning the Olympic Trials Regatta. For Dane, sailing and winning the US Olympic Trials is an unfulfilled dream. "I've sailed in the trials many times, but have never been to the Olympics. Most of the time, the person who has won in the trial has gone on to win the

gold." After finishing the Qingdao test event, John will compete in the US Trials this October to see if he can fulfill his dream.

Bromby from Bermuda sailed the Star class in the Barcelona, Savannah, Sydney and Athens games. He is the only Star class sailor in his home country, so he does not have to worry about an Olympic trial.

Reporting at sea is not for the 'faint' of heart

By Han Manman

"Did you take a motion sickness pill?" "How many times did you vomit today?" and "Don't eat too much before getting on board," became the greetings of choice for reporters covering the boat races.

On my second day in Qingdao, I was booked on a media boat to follow the athlete's performance. At 11:30am, the media center announced it was boarding time.

Altogether, 14 rescue boats and 22 rescue volunteers launched. Their main task was to carry any reporters who fainted back to the bank. When chatting with rescue team head Jiang Ming before launch, he said, "One media boat can carry eight reporters, and yesterday I had six seasick on only one boat." Jiang said local Qing-



A reporter was saved from faint to the first aid boat.
Photo by Zuma Cui

dao reporters have already been training to prevent seasickness by floating for hours and answering questions in English after a sickness test.

Jiang said women reporters get sick the most frequently, and the worst case yet was one woman who

had fallen into a coma by the time she was back on land. "Yesterday, the waves were very high and 80 percent of the reporters ended up sent back. One even injured his lower back," said Jiang.

At noon, our boat and four other carried 30 reporters and photographers to the competition launch. Since the day's weather was mild, we had to float and wait for the wind to pick up. Seasickness sets in quickest when a boat stops.

After hours of sun exposure, many reporters and photographers became sick up and asked for the rescue boat. Three hours later, when the referee finally announced the competition's start, the only boat left was ours, and the only woman on it was me.

Sail on, Sailors

By Han Manman

The "Good Luck Beijing" Qingdao International Sailing Regatta, the last yachting test before the 2008 Olympic sailing competition from August 9 to 25 will lower its curtains tomorrow at the Olympic Sailing Center in Qingdao.

As a co-host Olympic city to host Olympic sailing competition and Paralympics in 2008, Qingdao has come to test everything specific to the next year's Olympic Games, from competition venues and traffic control to food and security systems.

Venue: green and hi-tech

The Qingdao Olympic Sailing Centre is called "the best Olympic venue in Asia" by the world medias at last year's first test regatta.

The center is located on Fushan Bay, just a short bus ride from the city center. According to Wang Wei, executive vice-president and secretary-general of the Qingdao Regatta Committee, in a bid to hold a successful Olympic sailing competition, the Qingdao government converted its dockyard into a unique first-class marina.

"Moving the dockyard is a very huge project, there is also a residential area inside the dockyard," said Wang, adding, "The total investment in the center is about 3.28 billion yuan (US\$433 million), of which 1.78 billion yuan (US\$235million) was used for moving the dockyard."

The center covers 450,000 square meters of land, comprises 300,000 square meters of competition area and 150,000 square meters for future development. Apart from the Olympic village, which will be finished at the end of 2007, all of the facilities began operation during the regatta.

Li Zhipeng, director of the committee engineering and environment protection department said hydro, solar and wind power are being used, as well as recycling water, making it a modern venue combining the concepts of a recyclable economy and a green Olympics.

In the basement of the media center, there is a machine room containing white metal boxes and black pipes. It is used for the Sea-water Source Heat Pump Air Conditioning System, environmentally friendly technology using seawater to regulate the temperature of the media center. It is the first seawater air conditioning system ever to be used in China. Using this system can save 120,000 yuan (US\$15,800) annually.

On the main breakwater stands a row of stylish windmills, many audiences take photos in here with the beautiful sea as the background, however, less know that the windmill is a very important energy saving machine as its rotation not only produces power for lighting and saving nearly 6,570 kilowatts every year, but indicates that the wind is strong enough for sailing.



Sailors from around the world competed for yesterday's medal race in Qingdao.

Photos by Zuma Cui

Volunteer service and food

Around 1,400 volunteers who participated in the regatta were selected from 4,500 applicants. During the period of the early June and early August, they joined four major training sessions: general training, professional training, venue training and job training.

Jiang Jing, vice secretary-general of the Olympic Sailing Committee in Qingdao said the volunteers mainly work at the Sailing Center, hotels, airport and elsewhere across 21 services such as security, transportation, translation and medication.

For the first time, this year's regatta has accepted volunteers of foreign nationalities. Out of the 147 foreign nationality applicants, nine were chosen after multiple layers of selections. Their may task is the translation, fresh quote

for medias and so on.

The committee this time also provide "one-stop" service to reporters including appointed hotel, free launch and two tea break in the morning and afternoon.

Twenty-nine media service boats have been made with bigger hulls to allow photographers the comfort they need to take the best snaps. While on board, they must wear safety chains at all times. Reporters and photographers shuttling between different spots at the Sailing Centre by electric vehicles are provided lunch.

Food safety is a hot issue in every international event. *Beijing Today* came to the center kitchen to fully understand the meal service.

Wu Shisen, manager of the meal service department said the

sailing center has three dining centers, each centers have four dinning rooms that provide free buffet launch including international technical official dinning room, athletes dinning room and media dinning room.

To guarantee the food safety, Wu said they have a very strict sanitation regulation. For example, the cold dish must go through three ultraviolet air sterilization lamps before produced.

"In last years race, we receive many athletes complaints that we only provide them Chinese meal. This year, our Chinese food and western food proportion are four to six with 50 yuan free launch standard." Wu disclosed that in next year's Olympic, the committee would provide higher standard to the athletes with 135 yuan per one per day.

Sea security

Shandong Frontier Defense Corps is undertaken the regatta sea security task. Chief commander Wen Xirong said their main task is to guarantee the safety of the competition area. "Our duty fleet must clean up all the hooker, private yacht and other barriers that effect the competition before 11:30 am. After that, the fleet must withdraw out of competition area and carry out blockage guard and monitoring."

Wen said at noon on August 11, when the navy patrolled the sea, they found an Norwegian athlete asking help of them in English, she looked very pale. They immediately sent the athlete to the bank. After that, they knew that she was in training. If the navy had not found her, it would have been very dangerous.

weather

As the competitions were always postponed due to weak winds and two days whole events were delayed because of the weather, there are many doubts about whether Qingdao is suitable for Olympic sailboat racing. Qu Chun from the Olympic Sailing Commission Competition department said, "It is normal for the regatta with some windless days like this and everything is both in our plan and control." He said there would be 13 competing days and two reserve days next year, and the competing rounds are flexible.



Wind power is used for the first time in the venue's road lights.

Comment



I would like to suggest that the committee supply more information for the spectators. For example, a map showing locations of competition areas, where you can park your car.

— Richard F. Berger, American tourist



This is a test event for us volunteers as well as a test event for everyone, so we're training, and learning how to work the best for the Olympics next year.

— Alyson Woolfrey, Canadian volunteer



I was delighted with how everyone embraced the concept of how things are different for sailors with disabilities. This will be one of the best venues we've ever had for the disabled.

— Ian Harrison, the former president of the International Foundation for Disabled Sailing.



There is a problem since there is no live TV broadcast before the finals. I'm forced to wait for the announcement of the final results.

— Eric van Staten, journalist from Holland De Telegraaf



I love the British team! Everything is awesome here. Although the food is much different from our country, I enjoy it. I can see that Qingdao has put forth a great effort in this regatta.

— Charlotte Dobson, British Laser Radial sailor
Photos by Han Manman

Comment

By Li Xueyi



I have to start work at half-past seven every morning. It is really tiring, but worth the effort. Being a volunteer for the Olympic Games is an rewarding experience for all of us!

— Yu Yazhou, volunteer



More plugs less paper

The media zone is very convenient, but there is room for improvement. There are too many people in the media hall. There aren't enough power plugs. There are too many introduction papers — we just need the important ones.

— Takeuchi Hideyuki, journalist, Japan



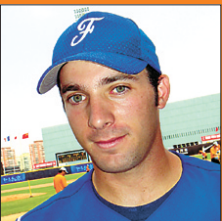
This field is the best-organized. The volunteers' smiles gave us a warm feeling, and the little holes in the chairs were excellently-positioned. We are proud of how much trouble the city went through to pull this all together.

— Zheng Dengnan, a college student



The Olympic field hall looks so beautiful. I have never seen such an excellent baseball field in Beijing ... It is very attractive, and the volunteers took good care of us. I'm glad they sell drinks in the stands.

— Yin Qi, a Chinese worker living in Japan



The accommodations are very comfortable. The hotel is not far away from the field. The traffic is also better now. I hope the '08 Olympics will be successful.

— Fessy Gaspard, outfielder, France

Take me out to the ballgame in Wukesong

By Jiang Xubo

The "Good Luck Beijing" 2007 International Baseball Tournament, which saw four teams from Japan, the Czech Republic, France and China vying for the championship, ended yesterday. The tournament was the first trial for Wukesong Baseball Field (WBF), which will hold the Olympic baseball events next year. With the Games just around the corner, how ready is WBF?

The venue

WBF, located in the west part of the city, has three fields: a practice field in the north and two competition fields. The larger one in the south is the major field, with a capacity of 12,000 seats, and the smaller one with 3,000 seats is the minor field, which held most of the games for the test event.

Turf and exposed red soil for a playing surface are two of the most important parts of a fan-shaped baseball field. WBF planted Bermuda grass, which is a popular choice for baseball fields around the world.

"The grass originates in the US. It has very thin and soft leaves, making it very suitable for baseball fields," Liu Ying, chief engineer, said.

The venue grew the grass in a Shanghai cultivation base with US seeds, then transplanted the turf for the tournament. The grass, however, is vulnerable to chilly weather, and the venue plans to cover the turf with insulated fabrics to keep it warm. "It's already perfect turf, and we decided to extend its life to next

year so that we don't have to lay out turf for the Games again," Liu explained.

Red soils, which cover the different parts of the fields including the pitchers mound, home plate, the infield and the outfield, differ in their clay and capacity to filter water.

Soils in the infield should be more refined, and soils in the outfield should be more raw, which will help players tell which area they are in just from the feel of the soil when chasing a ball with no time to look down, Liu said.

"It is one of the best fields I have ever seen. Playing on it is very exciting," Leblanc Maxime, French pitcher, said.

In addition, the soil on the infield is blended with additives, which make it difficult to collect dust.

The cushion wall, which circles the fields, is actually a steel net. The organizers planted Boston ivy at the feet of the wall, and vines are expected to cover the wall by next year's opening pitch.



Japanese baseball player Hayato Sakamoto (right) dodges a ball during a match against France.

Services for spectators

Organizers recruited 500 volunteers, most of whom were students from colleges. The volunteers wore orange T-shirts and provided medical, media and language assistance, and helped with security checks and drug testing.

The volunteers were positioned from the entrance to the field's stands to smile and provide directions, though there were also signs.

An information booth was not far from the gate. The sign board told the latest weather in English, Chinese and Japanese.

Down the road was another booth for storing strollers, then a concession stand selling smoked sausage, bread and cold drinks.

The sponsors brought drinks to the stands, and vendors walked up and down the stands to sell water and soda.

The music, mainly electronic renditions of "Take Me out to the Ball Game" and "We will Rock You", sounded throughout the stadium, and attendees were invited to get up and stretch when the Village People's YMCA boomed out of the speakers during a break.

Even if it rains, it won't be a problem for guests.

"We prepared 8,000 disposable raincoats. If the rain gets heavier and interrupts the game, we will arrange ticket refunds and evacuate the crowd," Li Jing, director of the organizer's audience service, said.

Medical services

WBF, part of the Wukesong Indoor Stadium, enjoys privileged access to medical expertise with the General Hospital of the Chinese PLA (Hospital 301), one of the assigned hospitals for the Games across the road.

The hospital allocated 31 doctors and nurses to provide medical services to athletes, officials, organizing staff, volunteers and the spectators.

"If there is any emergency in the venue, I will call the hospital to set up an express path from the venue to the hospital so we can send the injured there immediately. We held a few rehears-

als, and the whole process took 10 minutes at the longest," Li Tanshi, vice director of emergency department of Hospital 301 and the tournament organizing committee's medical manager, said.

The medical department set up two field of play (FOP) medical stops in the two venues for the competition, which included orthopedic doctors, surgeons and Cardiovascular doctors to provide first aid to athletes.

Li's medical stop was tested when Wang Chao, Chinese outfielder, was hit in the chest by the ball and fell to the ground during

a game against the Czech team on the second day.

"We carried his stretcher by hand. Once we got the umpire's signal, we were ready to rush onto the field for first aid. It turned out to be a false alarm when the athlete got up a few minutes later to continue play. I'm not sure if it was just a test, but it sure puts us on alert," Li said.

The medical department set up a separate Spectator Medical Station to provide medical services for the spectators.

Everything went fine, except for a few athletes with swollen tonsils, sprained ankles or scrapes.

Other services

The traffic flows well thanks to the venue's location. The subway proved to be the best way to get to WBF for a ball game, and the organizers posted a dozen signs in the Wukesong Subway Station, making it easier to get ground and find the venues.

The organizers also provided media services with impressive quality and efficiency. Game statistics and flash quotes are available within half an hour of the game's end.

Conferences followed the games are also well organized, but key departments like security and drug testing could be more open to journalists.



The baseball tournament kicked off on August 18.

CFP Photos

Comment

By Annie Wei



I trained for the BMX competition for over a year. It was my first time to be on a track like this. It's very hard for me. I saw the other top riders and asked Shanaze Reade, the women elite's winner, to autograph my clothes.

— **Li Jiawei, Chinese women athlete for the BMX Event**



I was surprised that the ticketing place said that all tickets had been sold out for the qualifying rounds on Monday, but yet, you see that not all the seats are taken. This sport is targeted at young people but the arriving spectators on the first day were more like senior citizens with time on their hands.

— **David Tarbotton, from Australian**



The track is really amazing and a pretty good race, very interesting. I like this sport. When my brother was young, he also rode BMX. It's brand-new in China, but a standard event in Europe and America.

— **Valentine, 19, Italian**



We watched the competition on TV yesterday and thought it was interesting. But, so far, we know very little about this event.

— **Huo Yun, 15, high school student**

Improvement

The spectators' seats provide a better view and are close to the entrance. However, for backstage working staff, it's a very different story.

The mixed zone is far away from the media seats, which means a journalist has to run between media areas to watch the competition and then rush back to the mixed zone to inter-

Power and technique required on the BMX track

First BMX Venue for the Olympic Games

The newly-constructed Laoshan BMX Venue hosted its maiden international event – “Good Luck Beijing” 2007 UCI BMX Supercross World Cup as a test event for the 2008 Olympic Games Monday and Tuesday.

There were 140 athletes from 27 countries all over the world taking part in the competition. As one of the legs of the 2007 UCI BMX World Cup, it brought together all the world's top athletes.

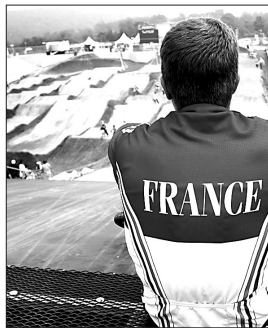
The bowl-shaped Laoshan BMX Venue covers an area of almost two hectares, has a floor space of over 3,300 square meters and contains almost 3,400 seats.

The organizers said, over 10,000 cubic meters of high-quality soil were used during the three-week long construction.

The soils were selected from 14 samples. In the end, experts from UCI came to Beijing to exam all the samples and decided on two, which offer good quality to make sure the track works effectively even on the rainy days.

The track is about 350 meters long, featuring an eight-meter high start ramp followed by two individual straight-aways, for men and women respectively.

There are 706 staff members working at the BMX venues including 106 paid workers and 600 volunteers, who are very friendly.



A French rider rests by the start ramp.

Photo by Ma Hui

view the athletes.

The whole track area is a great distance from the media center. You need to walk at least five minutes to arrive at the stairs and then climb six floors. There are only two elevators, which are either too slow or not allowed to be used by average staff because of “some VIP is arriving,” the stair volunteers told us.

By Annie Wei

Originating in California during the late 1960s, when teenagers imitated their motocross heroes on their bicycles, BMX has become popular, not only in the US, but all over the world, and destined to make its way to Europe and Australia over the next few decades. The 2007 UCI BMX Supercross world cup (Beijing) consists of both men's and women's races at the brand-new BMX venue.



Athletes fly up and over barriers at the track.

CFP Photo

The brand-new BMX Olympic track challenges all

The track is specially-designed for the Olympic Games, and it is the first time that men and women athletes get to compete in the same venue and share part of the same track.

The men's track is more difficult and more technique is required. On the second section of the track, there are three places requiring men riders to perform high jumps. If you fail the first jump on grass, your speed is definitely too slow to make it over the second or third jump and your overall time will be too slow, not allowing you to pass the qualifying round. Some athletes successfully flew over the first two jumps but failed the third. For excellent riders, the three jumps were a

piece of cake.

Donny Robison, winner of elite men's, said that the Supercross races are technical and the courses are big, so the power riders really have to establish their rhythm straight away and remain consistent. It takes an awesome rider just to get around this track since this one is the biggest they have experienced.

To most Asian riders, like Chinese and Japanese riders, it was really difficult for them to even make the first jump mainly because this event is new to China and other Asian countries but has a 40-year tradition in the US.

The women's track, which is less demanding than the men's, still requires lots of technique

and power. Shanaze Reade, the winner for elite women, has strong arm and leg power and flew over these big hills leading all the way.

“I don't think we can join in the men's track because it is very technical and requires more physical strength. But it was a coup for both women and men to compete in the same venue, which boosts the development of BMX sports,” Reade said.

“When we first saw this big track and big hills, I was scared. We remembered how hard it was but I think the women athletes did great jobs,” Robison said.

The boys described their feeling about the track as a burn, great to run on it and full of fun.

Baking under the sun

As Beijing has gotten really hot recently, the stadium's spectator service manager, Lu Liang, said they will provide visitors with fans and medicine in case someone succumbs to the heat.

At the entrance to the stadium, the volunteers have set up an information desk and provide free bottled water.

How much has the heat and other conditions affected the women athletes? The top three women athletes said that the weather was really hot and they had to create ways to cool down. Chausson, the second for the elite women, said that, thanks to the break between each round,

they could use the ice provided by the organizing committee to cool off.

Donny Robison, the winner from the US said he had been in town for three weeks. “I have no problem with the air pollution and the heat. California, where I am from, is always hot like this. I can't imagine how much better it will be when the Olympics arrive.”

But most Chinese attendees said it was too hot. “You can feel your bare feet sizzling,” a girl sitting in the stands said.

During short breaks, many people jammed into shady spots to chill.

Transportation

For most visitors, taking the subway is the most convenient option. It's about a ten-minute walk from the Babaoshan subway station exit to the BMX stadium. But, for people who live in the eastern part of the city, it takes at least one hour to get there. For people who do not live near subway line one, it takes about an hour and a half to two hours, since the Laoshan BMX Venue is a bit further outside the fifth west ring road.

The stadium has also arranged parking spaces for 500 bicycles 30 meters away from the stadium entrance.

It's a long way to ride

By Gan Tian

The Good Luck Beijing 2007 International Road Cycling Invitational Race was held last weekend.

The 174-kilometer road course attracts attention from various fields: journalists, athletes, team officials, Union of Cycling International officials, and IOC members.

After a series of examinations and evaluations, most of the riders claimed to have experienced "the most beautiful Olympic race cycling course in history."

Road course

The Olympic course, with a distance of 174 kilometers for the Mass Start Road Race, passes Beijing's most famous landmarks. Starting at Yongdingmen, it follows a path to the Temple of Heaven, Qianmen, Tian'anmen Square, Lama Temple, the Temple of Earth, Olympic Plaza, Peking University, Summer Palace and then it wanders into Beijing's suburban section by taking Badaling Express Way. The distance before finishing the circuit is about 79 kilometers. Then the riders go into the last four 24-kilometer laps before hitting the finishing line.

In the Invitational Race, all along the road, riders observed, not only Beijing's ancient architectures, but also enjoyed the city's greenery. The most important thing they experienced was the citizens' passion and friendliness. "It is really a nice road course. I enjoyed it very much through the downtown area. After I exited the city, there were more interesting things to see," said gold medalist race medalist, Gabriele Bosisio.

Ai Yu, the general secretary of Road Cycling of Beijing Olympic Committee, said, "The course was finally finished in March this year, even though the designing team started their work last July." After the Beijing Olympic Committee (BOC) finished designing the course, UCI officials came to examine and evaluate it. "They were satisfied with most of the course, but in some parts we had different ideas."

In Badaling Express Way,

the BOC first decided to let the riders take the main road in consideration of traffic, but the UCI thought that the road course should allow the riders to feel more connected to the natural surroundings and have more interaction with the spectators, so they suggested the winding service road. "Later we (BOC) compromised. We arranged more winding and natural sections in downtown, and the UCI thought it was a great idea and agreed finally," Ai said.

UCI rules demand that the road should be wider than six meters and Beijing's Olympic Road Course reaches that standard except in one place. "Chengmendong (The City's Gate) in Juyongguan has a width of less than six meters. It's an ancient gate that all the riders will rush through. But the UCI members agreed on this place, as they thought it is a place full of culture and calm," Ai said.

In the circling course from Juyongguan to Badaling, the course combines well with nature and the human architectures. "To see riders from different countries racing under the Great Wall brings great enjoyment," said Sun Kanglin, committee president and general secretary and director of Beijing Sports Bureau.

Andrew Ryan, the director of Association of Summer Olympic International Federations, mentioned that there would be more screens installed in the starting and finishing areas at next year's Olympics, and Sun also assured that more spectator seats would be equipped at the starting line.



A volunteer monitoring the riders on an uphill road.

Volunteers

There are 512 volunteers in Road Cycling. The committee divided them into two groups. The first group, 229 university students, was posted at the starting and finishing areas. The second group, 283 people known as "flowing volunteers", was also divided into two parts: volunteers in the first part were transferred from the starting line to Juyongguan, the finishing line, immediately after the race began. They were there to welcome and serve the first-arriving riders. The rest helped the staff at the starting line to clean the race-course, and two hours later, they were also transferred to Juyongguan to join the others.

Wang Jifen, the manager of the volunteering job in Road Cycling Race Course, mentioned, "Because the race is done in an open area, we had, at-the-ready, umbrellas and raincoats to

ensure that the riders could successfully finish the course even if the weather was bad."

As well, 69 security volunteers were arranged along the road course. There were also city volunteers from various districts and counties where the race took place. Most people thought highly of the volunteers. "They were helpful, especially because all of them could speak good Chinese and they helped us communicate with the Chinese," said Andy Lee, one of the US team officials.

However, there was space for improvement in the volunteering area. Volunteers can help in whatever way even if it's outside their team. A foreign official was in need of two batteries for his camera, but was rejected by one of the volunteers, as she "was in charge of helping the IOC officials."

Security and Traffic

To ensure the race a success, Beijing Security Bureau and Traffic Authorities released a notice to the public to control traffic.

Since 10am Saturday morning, public traffic was stopped around Yongdingmen. At 12:15pm and until the end of the race, all the road course areas were under traffic control at different times, one hour before the first rider's expected arrival time until the last rider passed it.

Visitors were required to stand behind the security lines to watch, with one guard or

policeman every ten meters. At the Juyongguan finishing line, all the journalists, officials, and shuttle buses were required to pass through the security check.

"The race didn't bring any incontinence for us," Gu Luoxiang, a driver, said, "There were many police there to tell us which way to go. I felt really moved. It took me only five minutes than usual to get to my destination. After I finished my business, I stopped nearby and watched the race with the other spectators. It was so marvelous."

Comment

By Wang Yi / Zhou De



What we did was direct the athletes by using yellow flags. It seemed to be a very simple job, but it was scorching at noon and we were bathed in sweat. Still, as athletic students, we are very glad to take part in the service activities for the test event.

— Yang Fan (left) and Zhang Nan, volunteers Beijing Sport University



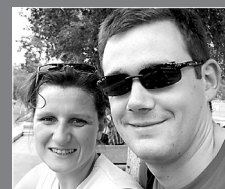
I guess the cycling team will receive the warmest welcome of all because of the crowds of students, passers-by and store clerks they cycle past. The People's Armed Police, traffic police, city management forces and security guards from nearby schools are all standing on the sidelines.

— Zhang Shaofeng, security guard from Beijing University Resource Hotel



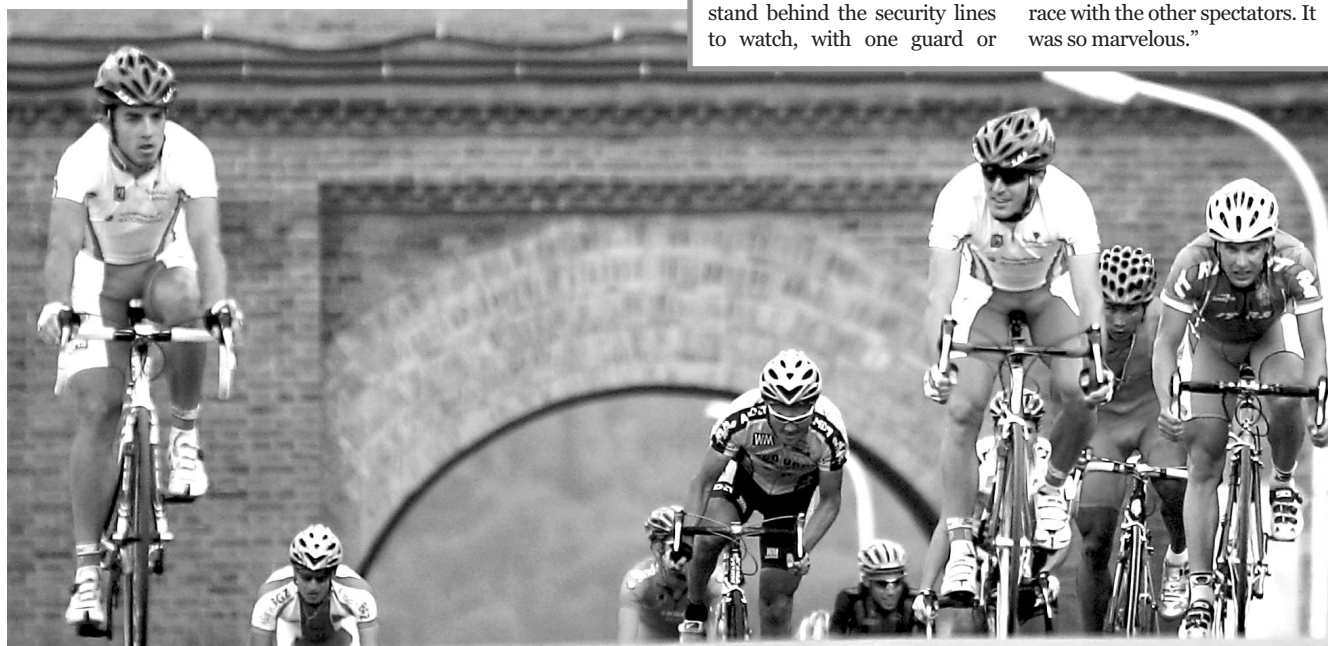
I came out early around noon to join the spectators. I think it's great that anyone interested can watch this event for free. People along the road got very excited when the cycling team approached. They cheered and shouted "Jia You (Come on)" when they whooshed by. I waited for an hour to catch a glimpse of the event and snap a photo, but it was worth the wait!

— He Naixun, student, Beijing Information Science and Technology University



Candidly, we knew little about the match taking place. We were just hanging around the Daguan Yuan and stumbled upon it. A really wonderful introduction for us and we are looking forward to the Beijing Olympics next year.

— Mc Candless Thomas and wife, France



Riders arrived at the Juyongguan Gate of the Great Wall.

Photos by Brook Wang

A Century of T

“This theatre festival is like continuing a dream for us.”
– Shi Ran, college theatre director

By Dianna Bai / Li Meng / Li Yidan

Fifteen gifted collegiate theatre troupes – journeying from places as far away as Xinjiang, Malaysia, and Vienna – have arrived in Beijing to celebrate the 100th anniversary of theatre. The Nine Theatres at the Chaoyang Cultural Center raised its crimson curtains on August 11th to some of the most celebrated Chinese plays of the century, each acted and directed by young devotees of the stage.

The 2007 College Theatre Festival, which will run through to the end of the month, features a spectrum of creative productions. Beijing theatre lovers can follow these youthful actors as they travel through the landscape of time – from the colorful dramatics of the Peking Opera and American Arthur Miller's poignant Depression era remembrances, to everyday struggles of migrant workers in contemporary China.

Since the early 20th century, college theatre has cultivated some of the country's most talented actors, writers, and directors. For the last seven years, The College Theatre Festival, held in Beijing, has showcased the innovative interpretations of the country's newest generation of stage artists. Speaking at the festival's opening ceremony, renowned avant-garde director, Meng Jinghui, advised the young, bright-eyed thespians before him: “Never rely on your predecessors, never trust your theatre department, and always believe in yourselves.”



Photo provided by 2007 College Theater Festival of China



The cast of Little Roach poses for a post-performance picture.

Photo provided by the Chinese Academy of Sciences Graduate Student Theater Group

AIDS patient Ken cares for another patient in The Road of Love Photo provided by Heart Towards the Sun Theater

The Road of Love Presented by Malaysia's Heart Towards the Sun Theatre

“The teens are turbulent years full of struggle and uncertainty. Everybody makes mistakes in their youth. Most people, however, emerge out of adolescence carrying only a few scars and regrets. But Michael Chow, whose life story inspired the deeply stirring “Road of Love,” was left with a much bigger scar: the HIV virus.

“The Road of Love” follows the life of Ken, Michael's alter ego, on stage. Immediately we witness a story of suffering and rebirth. Teenage Ken is a cocaine and heroin addict tangled up with a crowd of drug users and prostitutes. One feverish night and a suicide attempt, finally get him into a rehabilitation center where he is given a second chance. A compassionate nurse named Anqi tells him that “life is like a blank piece of paper.” Every wrong you commit is a fold or crease. When you lay piles of wrongs on top of each other, the page becomes unrecognizable. But with help, the page can be yours again, to paint whatever you desire.

Violent movements on stage reflect Ken's tumultuous struggle. Through perseverance, he learns to overcome his addic-

tion. He falls in love with the angelic Anqi at the same time. Their innocent romance turns tragic, however, when Ken learns that his illness has worsened. Just as he makes up his mind to open a shelter for AIDS victims, Anqi leaves him. With her departure, Ken reaches the terrible realization that he may never have a normal life.

But as a testament to his character, Ken does not fall into numbing despair. Instead, he opens the shelter he had planned to take care for other patients. The Chinese phrase for “The Road of Love” sounds astonishingly similar to the word for “AIDS.” Ultimately, the love in the “The Road of Love” refers to the camaraderie between the AIDS patients and a community bonding together to face a world that, too often, fears and misunderstands them.

The World Health Organization estimates that between 2.8 and 9.8 million people in Asia are HIV positive, including at least 650,000 in China and rising. One major obstacle to its effective prevention and treatment is the stigma associated with the illness. A recent study reported

in the Chinese press found that nearly a quarter of the students in Beijing would be unwilling to take a class with someone who was HIV positive – even though they know that such a person would not pose any danger to them. Lucy Wong, one of the organizers of the play, has spent the last fifteen years educating elementary and middle school students in Inner Mongolia about AIDS. Through theatre, she said, we can help people see that AIDS is not so frightening.

After the performance, Chow stepped onto the stage. He was greeted with thunderous applause. His shelter in Kuala Lumpur, at this very moment, cares for ten AIDS patients, including two children. Chow's gentle smile and deep eyes do not offer us any clue that, once upon a time, Chow was a troubled kid caught up in a world of drugs. His demure presence smacks of wisdom, the kind that only profound suffering, as well as, triumph can bestow.

“We want to tell AIDS patients around the world to never lose hope,” he said. “Life is not lost. It can become more beautiful.”

Schedule of performances

Wind and Rain

Presented by Beijing Technology University
 The story of a Russian hero.
 August 16-17, Premiere Oriental Theatre

The American Clock

Presented by the Beijing Institute of Politics and Law
 No American was left untouched by the Great Depression. Based on the play by Arthur Miller.
 August 17-18, TNT Theatre

Little

Presented by Beijing Technology University
 The story of a Russian hero.
 August 16-17, Premiere Oriental Theatre

Theatre



The cast of 6:3 goofs off during rehearsal

Photo provided by Zhao Miao



The American Clock Presented by The Beijing Institute of Politics and Law

"Three ticks of a grandfather clock mark the beginning of depression era America. A lone guitarist is the first person on stage, singing a slow, melancholy tune about a "drifter off to see the world." During the Great Depression of the 1930s, almost every American became a drifter of sorts. Their tattered dreams and crumbling dignity became the subject of Arthur Miller's 1980 play, "The American Clock."

Based on his own memories of the Depression, Miller's story tells of a greedy country getting its comeuppance. The play, rewritten and performed by students from the Beijing Institute of Politics and Law, is a collage of 30-some characters. Whether rich or poor, white or black, shoeshine boy or Wall Street financier, no life was left untouched by the national crisis.

The story centers around the Baums, an upper-class New York family hit hard by the Depression. Their teenage son, Sydney, finds himself unable to go to college and pressured into a relationship with the wealthy landlord's daughter, an irritating 13-year-old. The father, Moe, once a proud businessman, spends much of his time wandering around the stage searching for employment and clinging desperately to the last threads of his dignity. The beautiful mother, Rose, is an

emotionally flighty woman shocked by what has happened.

Throughout the play, somber patches of light penetrate the mostly darkened stage. Scenes are intertwined with sober melodies. Rose's fear and worry are translated into a fretful interpretative dance. A clap of a stool becomes a haunting gunshot – several characters, in the absence of hope, take their own lives.

Sydney says at one point, "I waited with that crazy kind of expectation that comes when there is no hope, waited for the dream to come back from wherever it had gone to hide." The American Clock captures not only the death of the American Dream, but also the breakdown of well-defined social roles. One poignant moment sees the disgraced father, Moe, sheepishly asking his son for subway fare. The Great Depression left fathers unable to fulfill their role as the family breadwinner, driving many into despair. Another moving scene takes place at the unemployment office, where people from all walks of life share their stories: a single mother with three children evicted to the streets, an unemployed doctor starving to death, and former well-to-do businessmen barely able to handle the shame of that dirty word, "welfare."

Though it has been nearly 90 years since the Great Depression, The American Clock still holds lessons for the present, especially for today's China. "We wanted to remind people to keep a clear head," Li Xiaoshi said, the lead actor and a student of international economic law, said. Although we should be optimistic about China's economic boom in recent years, Li suggests we must not get caught up blindly in what seems like an unstoppable whirlwind of newfound prosperity.

"Like the Mississippi River depicted in this play," The American Clock director Wu Ying Jie said, "We should be steady and conscious of reality."



Left: Sydney and Mr Roberts reminisce about the Great Depression in The American Clock.

Photo by Dong Ge

Right: A husband and wife are strangers to each other in A Fairytale of Desire.

Photo provided by Vienna University Theater Group

A Fairytale of Desire Presented by Vienna University

"A Fairytale of Desire, created by students of the Chinese studies department at Vienna University, tells the story of a man and a woman who share the same essence but in different ways, like water and ice. By projecting upon each other unrealistic ideals of the perfect partner and the perfect life, they get lost in their unsatisfied desires. In the course of the play, their relationship turns from a state of emotional and spatial distance to one of close proximity.

As a marriage of two cultures, "A Fairytale of Desire," uniquely blends ancient Greek mythology with traditional Chinese theatre and music. At the same time, the play emphasizes the linguistic differences between German and Chinese, not as an unsolvable problem, but as an interesting challenge for the actors as well as the audience. The main characters speak German, while the action and dialogue is translated into Chinese by a Chinese story-teller and a funny "Mozart" figure. A Fairytale of Desire, which opens tonight at the SARS theatre, is an attempt to overcome those barriers by using symbols, figures and topics which are understood by all cultures.

The first act focuses on the extreme distance between the two main characters. They are a couple who lead parallel lives that never intersect. "She" is a businesswoman and "He" spends all his time at home. The man and woman, distanced from each other on the stage, speak only in monologues about themselves.

In the second act, they find themselves in a dreamlike scenario, where they are stuck together without being able to separate. In this odd situation, everything they touch turns to gold. After a violent climax, the play finishes in a state of balance with an open-ended and unresolved conclusion. In direct reference to Taoist philosophy, the concluding scene attempts to tell everything by telling nothing.

Roach
Presented by the Chinese Academy of Science
The human world through the eyes of a cockroach.
August 18-19, SARS Theatre
Star
Presented by Sun Yat-sen University
The unique challenges and experiences of a child actor.
August 19-20, Premiere Oriental Theatre
Mad of Love
Presented by the Heart Towards

the Sun Theatre
The inspiring true story of an AIDS survivor.
August 20-21, TNT Theatre
A Patch of Forest
Presented by Xibei Normal University
Students never forget their love for the land.
August 21-22, SARS Theatre
A Cold, Cruel Judgment Day
Presented by Beijing Foreign Theatre
Based on a Japanese novel.

August 22-23, Premiere Oriental Theatre
A Fairytale of Desire
Presented by Vienna University
August 24-25, SARS Theatre
6:3
Presented by the Santuoqi Theatre
Six characters. Three stories. One play. Outlandish plots. Body language. Five spoken sentences. The last "6:3" ever.
August 25-26, Premiere Oriental Theatre

Lost in Dreams
Presented by Hebei College of Communication
August 27-28, SARS Theatre
Assembling the Chunliu Troupe
Presented by theatre lovers of all walks of life in tribute to the 100th anniversary of theatre
Performed by college graduates brought back to the stage by their enduring love for the theatre. A window into the daily lives of young urban professionals.
August 30-31, SARS Theatre

Venue

TNT Theatre & SARS Theatre
Where: Floor 3 & 4, Chaoyang Cultural Center, 17 Jintai Lu, Xiaozhuang, Chaoyang
Tel: 8599 1133
The Premier Oriental Theatre
Where: Oriental Plaza, No 1 Dong Changan Jie, Dongcheng
Tel: 6527 6911
When: 7:30pm each night
Admission: 10 yuan per show

Beauty and sorrow in Barcelona

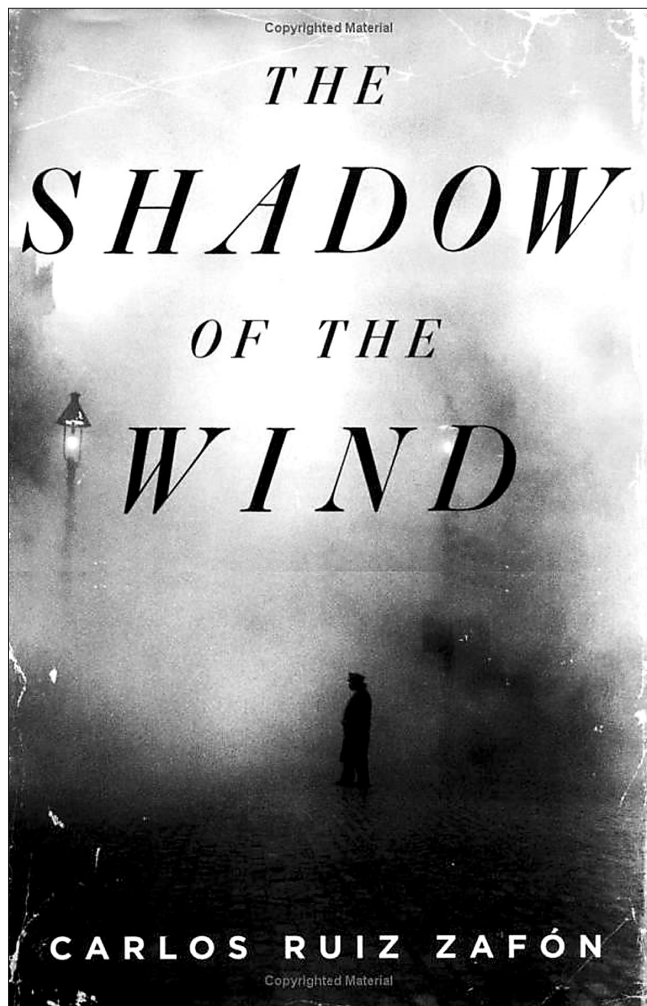
By He Jianwei

Spain's literature is quite different from its movies. When you read Carlos Ruiz Zafon's *The Shadow of the Wind*, it's hard to imagine that both director Pedro Almodovar and author Zafon are from Spain.

Almodovar's movies depict a fiery, intense love, while in Zafon's work, I only see sorrowful, desperate love. Both of them describe Barcelona. In Almodovar's eyes, it is a city of sunshine embraced by the Mediterranean; for Zafon, it is always shrouded in thick mist.

Love, desire, revenge, betrayal and incest may sound like elements of a pop novel, but for Zafon, a storyteller in the style of Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas, they are pieces of a grand jigsaw puzzle. The readers follow protagonist, Daniel Sempere, as he tries desperately to piece together clues.

In the 1950s in Barcelona, Sempere, the then 10-year-old son of a widowed bookstore owner, discovers *The Shadow of the Wind* by Julian Carax. The novel is rare, the author obscure and rumors tell of a horribly disfigured man who has been burning every copy he can find. As he grows up, Daniel's fascination with the mysterious Carax links him to a leftist jack-of-all-trades, Fermin Romero de Torres, and he begins investigating the author's life and death. Mean-



while, Daniel and Fermin are harried by a sadistic policeman, Carax's childhood friend.

As Daniel's quest continues, frightening parallels between his own life and Carax's begin

to emerge.

As the reader tries to figure out the links to modern Spanish history, two passionate and forbidden love affairs and an enigmatic novelist, Zafon, periodically lessen the tension of his dark melodrama by introducing humorous interludes or eccentric secondary characters.

Fermin is worldly, tough, shrewd, utterly loyal and bawdy. "For the life of God, I hereby swear that I have never lain with an underaged woman, and not for lack of inclination or opportunities. Bear in mind that what you see today is but a shadow of my former self, but there was a time when I cut as dashing a figure as they come. Yet even then, just to be on the safe side, or if I sensed that a girl might be overly flighty, I would not proceed without seeing some form of identification or, failing that, a written paternal authorization. One has to maintain certain moral standards," he said.

Fermin also specializes in peasant wisdom: "Look, Daniel. Destiny is usually around the corner. Like a thief, like a hooker or a lottery vendor: its three most common personifications. But what destiny does not do is home visits. You have to go for it."

The book offers a 600-page adventure through an epic of murder, magic, madness and doomed love.

CNPIEC Bookstore's Recommendations

The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends the following US best sellers for Beijing Today readers.

Break No Bones

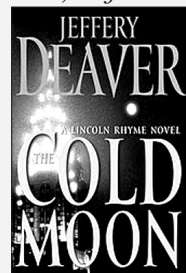
By Kathy Reichs, 480pp, Pocket, 80 yuan



Following the tremendous success of *Cross Bones*, Kathy Reichs explores another high-profile topic in *Break No Bones* case that lands forensic anthropologist Temperance Brennan in the middle of a gruesome international scheme.

The Cold Moon

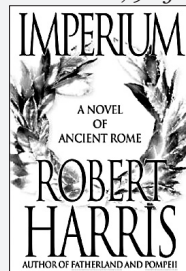
By Jeffery Deaver, 630pp, Pocket Star, 80 yuan



On a frigid December night, an eerie pattern emerges from two equally brutal murders, where a killer's calling card is a moon-faced clock that seemingly ticked away the victims' last moments. From his wheelchair, criminologist Lincoln Rhyme, tracks the Watchmaker, a time-obsessed genius. With every passing second, the Watchmaker is moving with razor-sharp precision to his next act of perfectly orchestrated violence.

Imperium

By Robert Harris, 320pp, Simon & Schuster, 90 yuan



Narrated by a household slave named Tiro, who actually served as Cicero's "confidential secretary" for 36 years, this fictional biography follows the statesman and orator from his early career as an outsider, a "new man" from the provinces, to his election to the consulship, Rome's highest office, in 64 BC.

CNPIEC Bookstore

Where: the second floor of CNPIEC, No 16 Gongti Dong Lu, Chaoyang
Open: 8:30am-6:30pm
Tel: 6500 1859, 6592 6871
(By He Jianwei)

Village of a Lonely Man

By Ju Xin

It's hard to identify Liu Liangcheng, the 46-year-old writer, because of his versatile personality. Mostly, Liu is a poet. His remarkable poetry anthology, *Enjoy the Sunshine in Huang Shaliang*, was a smash hit late last century. He is also the writer of three essay anthologies and a newly-published novel.

He was born in 1962 in a small and quiet village in Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. As a little boy, he worked as a farmer and shepherd. When he became an adult, little changed. He became a keeper of the machinery house in his village. He "only wrote in [his] spare time to unwind, and it was all about the surrounding village," he said in his first book, *Village of A Lonely Man*.

His days as a hermit were the foundation of his later works, especially his essays, which are "full of wit and humor that can never be chal-

lenged by his peers," critics said. His first anthology propelled him from obscurity to national fame.

This book is split into three parts: "The villa of human and animals," "The gate in the blowing wind" and "The wasted landscape." Under his poetic narration, all creatures in the pastoral villa have their own lives, including calves and mules, as well as, inanimate objects like, the wind, trees and desert sands.

The book is based on Chinese village life, and Liu chooses not to repeat cliché social conflicts. He devotes himself to discussion of human and nature relationships, which Liu says is the essence of humanity.

Depicted vividly in words and with a child-like heart,

Liu goes into detail on how the human soul is born before the body, and of the harmony

between humans and animals. Humans seem subordinate

in his works.

In his most interesting essay, "The whole shebang of a dog," Liu explained his admiration and wonder of the dog, and of its sense of duty and obligation. In "The man who fell in the mule's way," he wrote, "Both the body and the soul of the mule are left in antiquity. When they return to the modern world, they quietly and kindly follow their masters home."

Relishing in ridiculous scenes and expressions, the most attractive part of the book is the delicate description Liu paints of his natural philosophy of life.



News according to the majority

Digg in China

Although Digg began in November 2004 in the US, it has only become known in China during the last year. More and more Digg websites have emerged since last year.

No one knows how many Digg-style websites are on the Chinese Internet. Maybe the website you surf every day is a Digg website. For instance, tudou.com, the popular video website, posts front page videos based on Diggs from users.

Some Digg websites are focused on IT news and gadgets, while others focus on movies. Some mix Digg and blog technology, while others mix Digg and voting.

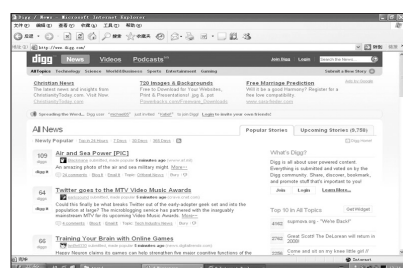
What is Digg?

Digg is a place for people to discover and share content from anywhere on the web. From top online sites to the most obscure blogs, Digg brings to the surface what the userbase considers the best. There are no editors at Digg – it is a place where the collective determines the value of content, and it is changing the way people consume information.

News stories and websites are submitted by users, and then promoted to the front page through a user-based ranking system. This differs from the hierarchical editorial system that many other news sites employ.

Everything on Digg – from news and videos to images and Podcasts – is submitted by users. Once something is submitted, other people see it and “Digg” what they like best. If a submission receives enough Diggs, it is promoted to the front page for millions of visitors to see.

The format is about sharing and discovery, and conversation builds around content. Digg promotes conversation and provides tools for the community to discuss topics they're passionate about. By looking at information through the lens of the community, users can always find something interesting and unique.



Screenshot of digg.com

Seven reasons that I love Digg

Amy Zhou, an IT engineer in an information management company, is one of the people who got involved in Digg earlier in China.

She has listed her top reasons that users may love Digging. “The items that appear in the front page are voted on by the users and not decided by the editors, which is most attractive to netizens,” she said.

As items appearing on Digg websites are selected by netizens, it can save a lot of time for users searching out information on the Internet. “Also, it will improve the reader's efficiency,” she said.

Zhou added that she believes Digg is a good platform for promoting bloggers. “Bloggers can Digg their posts and attract more readers to read and comment. They will have more readers, not only on Digg, but also on their blogs,” she said.

As well, Digg provides BBS functions. “Users can post comments and views on anything Diggged, whether positive or negative,” she said.

Furthermore, Digg tracks the records including the users' voting and commenting. “Users won't lose information about what they have read, Diggged and commented on,” she said.

Digg is a social networking tool. “You can make friends with people who have the same ideas as you and who read the articles you and your friends collect,” she said.

And, finally, every item on Digg has a unique address. “If an article has been Diggged already, you cannot accidentally repost it because the system will check the address of the item to be posted,” she said.

By He Jianwei

Earning a front page article, video or image isn't so amazing anymore if it happens on a Digg website. Readers decide what should appear on the front page, and what more people should watch.

Dozens of Digg sites have sprung up on the Chinese web in the last year, though many users remain unfamiliar with the format even if they read Digg entries daily.



CFP Photo

How Digg Works

Essentially, it's bringing democracy to digital media. As a user, you participate in determining all site content by discovering, selecting, sharing and discussing the news, videos and podcasts that appeal to you.

Discover

Submit your favorites. Find an article, video or podcast online and submit it to the Digg's websites. Your submission will immediately appear in “Upcoming Stories,” where other members can find it and, if they like it, Digg it.

Once a submission on Diggs reaches critical mass, it becomes “popular” and jumps to the homepage in its category. If it doesn't receive enough Diggs within a certain time period, it eventually falls out of the “Upcoming” section.

The “Upcoming” section helps to showcase recently-added news, videos and podcasts. Track submissions as they come in with Swarm, Stack, Big Spy or Arc, the real-time Flash visualization tools. You can also use Spy to watch the titles and descriptions as they roll down the page.

You can always check topic home pages to see what's popular, and you can subscribe to Really Simple Syndication (RSS) feeds of particular topics, popular and upcoming sections, individual users

and search terms of your choice.

Select

Digg. Participate in the collaborative editorial process by Digging stuff that you like best. As you Digg, you contribute to the popularity of any given item. You also build a history of Digging that you or your friends can view.

Bury. If you find stories with bad links, off-topic content or duplicate entries, click “Bury.” That's how you get spam out of the system and let the good stuff rise to the top.

The system only works when users actively participate on a large scale, so make sure to do your part and Digg and Bury content that matters to you.

Share

Build a network. Invite your friends or find them on Digg and add them to your friends list. Then your friends can track what you're Digging and you can see what they Digg as well, enabling you to collectively find news together.

Email. Send your friends – Diggers or non-Diggers – the stories that you Digg.

Discuss

Comment. Share your opinions by commenting on stories, videos and podcasts, as well as Digging and Burying comments by other users.

Digg Tools

HotDigg – Real time news on Digg as your screen saver

DiggBot – An MSN robot which remind you of updated Digg items

Google IG Module – View recent stories from Digg on your personalized Google homepage

Google Coop Module – See Digg articles at the top of your Google search results

Digg Widget – When news is updated on Digg, it will automatically be displayed on your site in the format that you choose.

More Digg websites

Digg.com – The first Digg website in the world.

Quotiki.com – Find your favorite quotes on this site.

Livevideo.com – Digg your favorite videos here.

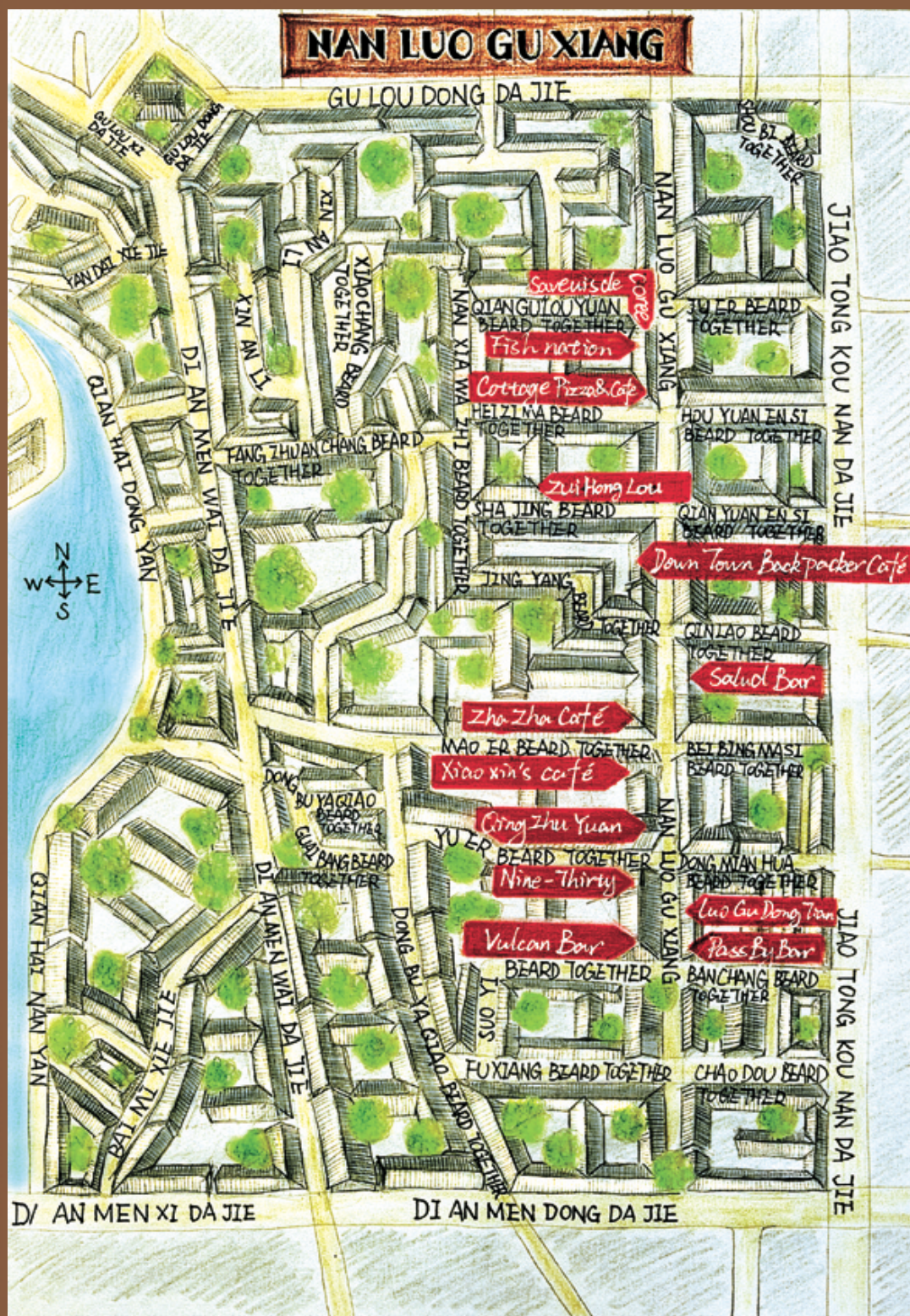
Lipstick.com – Latest paparazzi news

Diglog.com – Find interesting and odd news here

Banerzhuan.com – Mixture of blog, BBS and media.

Nanluoguxiang

Hutong home of cozy cafes and dining



By Annie Wei

Nanluoguxiang is one of Beijing's oldest areas and one of 25 protected old town districts. Recently, it has emerged as a new hot spot – a trend not missed by lifestyle magazines and newspapers. TV shows are shot here, and tourists have included it as one of the city's must-do hutong rides.

Historical records show that the area was home to well-off families as early as the Ming and Qing dynasties, as well as celebrities, high-ranking officials, intellectuals and artists.

The alley stretches nearly a kilometer, and connects with eight other east-west hutongs, which earned it the name "centipede street." Today, it is the perfect time capsule of what a Beijing neighborhood was like 800 years ago.

During the last four years, as many as 40 shops have opened in Nanluoguxiang, as well as 25 restaurants including the famous Pass By Bar and Fish Nation. The alleys draw in world travellers with cheap hotels and youth hostels, and nice java stops like Xiao Xin's Cafe. The occasional Xinjiang dining spots all serve up everyone's favorite piping-hot chuan. There are also more cute clothing shops opening, the central theater school and stands to offer fresh fruits, ice cream and soft drinks.

Nanluoguxiang is a much preferred stop to Houhai, where vendors and pedicabs swarm like buzzards all waiting to pounce on any potential tourist. The quickly-passing summer nights are the best time to sit outside with a roast chuan in one hand and a cold beer in the other. On the weekends, many familiar faces hang out on the street, out for a stroll or a cup of Joe.

When I moved to Beijing four years ago, I lived in Jiaodaokou, which is quite close to this alley. Many expats lived in a nice place in the Ju'er hutong, and they had barbecues all summer. Back then, Nanluoguxiang was far less hopping than it is now, and the area only had a handful of small cafes and restaurants.

Today, it's a totally different story. More out-of-towners have moved to this area. They say it is a great location, close to the cafes and restaurants. It still has the feel of traditional Beijing life, complete with a courtyard enclosed in gray walls that echo traditional Beijinghwa.

CFP Illustration

Continued on page 17 ...

Embracing the sun and the stars with friends

...continued from page 16

Cottage pizza house – fit for dolls



Photo by Li Shaolin

By Annie Wei

Cottage pizza house is at the north end of Nanluoguxiang. It's very small, but has a distinguished style.

The building is white outside, and the interior is adorned with white curtains, lace tablecloths, plates and lamps. The interior walls are a creamy yellow with floral decorations under the lights and dolls at the window.

Mainly a stop for pizza and coffee, the college also serves desserts. Its pizzas come themed as seafood, Hawaiian and American topped. They also serve up pies custom-made for spice, cheese and fruit lovers.

To wash it down, there is a wide array of reasonably-priced coffee. Italian espresso runs 10 yuan per cup. Many foreigners who step in for an espresso stick around at the bar to finish it. If you're looking for special or alternative tastes, try the strawberry latte.

It's that kind of place a girl will love. The best company to have something in a restaurant like this is either girlie girls or boys who adore pink and love Barbie dresses.

Where: 17-2 Nanluguxiang

Open: noon- 11pm, (Mon-Fri; noon-midnight, Sat and Sun

Tel: 8404 0378

Xiao Xin's Café

By Annie Wei

Xiao Xin's Café is one of the most popular along the alley. Dark green is the main exterior color, which suits the theme of a coffee house and the hutong environment.

But be warned, not all the decorations are new and special. You'll see an old radio and bicycle, as well as, old books and magazines on the walls and bookshelves. But, it's not like you could create the same feeling in your home – it requires that special Xiao Xin touch. There are huge potted plants in the cafe, goldfish swimming in a glass bowl, and natural light streaming through its rooftop skyline making it seem quite spacious.

The best food Xiao Xin's Café offers is their homemade cheesecake and coffee. Their cheesecake has many different flavors,

like lemon, coffee and blueberry and costs 16 yuan per piece. Also offered are muffins, brownies and tiramisu. I like the cafe's flower milk tea, especially the lavender and rose.

A friend gave her reasons for liking Xiao Xin's Cafe: better air-conditioning, although it is easy to hear conversations at other tables, the all-male service staff members are more polite and offer better service and a wide selection of magazines though old and used.

My reasons differ from my friend. I like using my laptop. I should come here with my laptop and do some work. At Xiao Xin's Café, it's quiet and pleasant.

Where: 103 Nanluoguxiang

Open: 9:30am-midnight

Tel: 6403 6956



Photo by Blinking

By Annie Wei

Pass By Bar opened in 1997, when the owner, Jin Xin, started running it. At that time, Nanluoguxiang was unknown.

The motivation for opening a bar like Pass By was simple. Jin liked hanging out with friends for drinks. At that time, there were not many interesting western bars and restaurants like there are today. As a solution, Jin opened Pass By, a laid-back place to drink and dine with friends.

With a background in art, Jin quickly turned an obscure little place into something special. Now the bar has grown and includes Tibetan-style decor. You'll see carvel and Tibetan masks hanging on the walls, wooden furniture, Chinese courtyard houses and hear soothing background music.

My favorite activity is sitting in the courtyard to enjoy the sun, especially in early summer after the cold winter has flown, or spending a Sunday afternoon with special friends.

During a cold winter night, it's

very cozy to be sitting with good buddies, inside the Pass By with candles burning brightly and delicious food and wine on the table.

Ju'er hutong didn't allow foreigners to live in until 2003, when China's policy changed making it possible for them to rent local residents' apartments easily. Comparing that time to present day, Hai Yan'er, the owner of Pass By Bar said that customers before were all quite stable. Nowadays, you see many new, fresh faces. One reason is the expanding ex-pat communities, and the bar is attracting more and more tourists.

As the cafe and restaurant business in Nanluoguxiang became more competitive, Pass By had the opportunity to open its second place, the Pass By Restaurant and Coffee, at No 114, serving up more delicate cuisine. The restaurant now also has a delivery and catering business.

Where: 108 Nanluoguxiang

Open: 10am-2am next day

Tel: 8403 8004



Photo by Blinking

Vulcan Bar

By Annie Wei

Opposite the Pass-By Bar, you will find the Vulcan Bar and its bookstore. What is special about the Vulcan Bar is not its bar or food business, but its culture and art development company that provides VIP service after you apply for membership.

The company often organizes outdoor activities such as camping, training for life in the wild, driving for fun, drawing and photography.

They create activities like driving cars from Beijing, Shanghai and Shenzhen to ZhenZhou and Henan, stopping, then continuing on to Tibet and through Shanxi, Shaanxi, Ningxia, Gansu and Qinghai. At the journey's end, the main purpose is to donate books to a Tibetan school.

It was a very popular kind of group event for middle-class Chinese who have newer model cars.

Where: 143 Nanluguxiang

Open: noon-3am next day

Tel: 8404 0561



Photo by Blinking

Zha Zha Café

By Annie Wei

In Chinese traditional custom, Zhazha, the bird, is a symbol of happiness. So, the name of the Zha Zha Café and its grey brick exterior design easily impresses any Chinese people visiting for the first time.

The owners of the Zha Zha were classmates when they studied in the Central Academy of Theater, also in Nanluoguxiang. They decided to have their own cafe here because they liked the street. One of them was teaching at the same school and the other was a freelance artist.

Some people recommend this cafe because they say it's the cleanest and neatest on the whole street. Sitting there, you will encounter many students from the Central Academy of Theater and their very artsy friends.

Where: 101 Nanluguxiang

Open: 9:30am-2am next day

Tel: 8402 4851



Photo by Blinking

Continued on page 18 ...

Fish Nation: good place to throw a party

...continued from page 17

First cozy stay-in at Beijing



By Annie Wei

Beijing's array of hotels array ranges from cheap, old flats to five-star full-service deals. For international backpackers passing through, nothing is better than a youth hostel style: cheap and clean, but comfy and friendly.

The Park Hyatt and Beijing Hotel are hardly a place one can expect to chat about culture, fun experiences in other countries or share practical tips about how to bargain in silk market.

Peking Down Town Backpackers Accommodation is a great choice, not just for backpackers, but also for more and more young people from all over the world on their first trip to the capital who have yet to track down their own apartment.

Felix, 27, an American-born Chinese, is one resident who came to Beijing alone. "I plan to stay in China for a few years and pick up my language," he said.

"I found Peking Down Town Backpackers Accommodation ... online. The review said it was a youth hostel style, in a great location - a hutong environment - and the price is cheap," he said.

Felix said it was a good choice for him. He made friends quickly and rented a hotel bicycle to get most places he wanted to go. Although he knew no one in town, his friends network expanded quickly.

"It's very easy to find friends in the hostel to hang out [with], and then make new friends, and friends' friends," Felix said. "After I decided to stay in Beijing for a longer time, to explore the city and culture better, I found myself an apartment and moved out."

He says the hostel is quite popular. "I was not very sure [about my decision to] finally move out after living there for 15 days - the hostel staff kept asking me to confirm because they had new customers and needed extra rooms."

The hostel provides day tours to the Great Wall at Badaling and the Ming Tombs, Summer Palace, Forbidden City and Temple of Heaven. Trip packages include tickets, lunch, transportation and an English-speaking tour guide, as well as Chinese acrobatic, Beijing opera and Shaolin kung fu performances.

Where: No 85 Nanluguoxiang
Tel: 8400 2429



By Annie Wei

Fish Nation is known for its British-style fish and chips. The first shop at Sanlitun is a bit small, but provides good choices for hungry late-night clubbers. In 2005, the second Fish Nation opened in Nanluguoxiang.

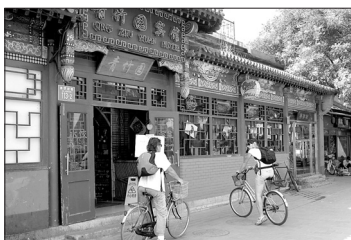
Compared with the first one, it seems a little better by offering a rooftop area and a spacious first floor, which is well-decorated. It has a wooden door, long tables and big chairs. The ceiling seems higher than the other restaurants on the street, which makes people feel the ambience.

Apart from fish and chips, the restaurant offers gourmet pizzas, salads, pastas, soups and a British style of

breakfast with wine and varied drinks. My first Fish Nation dining experience was with a friend for a winter weekend brunch. We ordered a lunch set, costing 39 yuan each, but that bought us plenty of food. The meal was placed on lovely, simple white plates. I recommend the pizza and the fish dishes, either the bass in aluminum foil, or the British-style fish and chips.

We visit Fish Nation more often in summer to enjoy the night breeze, have a mojito, and chat with friends on the rooftop. It just doesn't get any better!

Where: 31 Nanluguoxiang
Open: 9:30am-1am daily
Tel: 6401 3249



Qing Zhu Yuan

By Wei Ying

Some months ago, I made dinner plans with some university friends. When we finally met at 7:30 at the south entrance of Nanluguoxiang, we were undecided on what to eat. My Chinese men friends rejected my idea of pizza, soup and red wine since they wanted yangrouchuan (lamb kebab).

Eventually, we found Qingzhuyuan, where we noticed a group of people outside, happily munching on kebabs.

Then we wandered up to the third floor, a terrace rooftop with heavy wooden tables and a great view that was very nice. The alcohol we ordered was Chinese erguotou, which cost 35 yuan for 500ml, and Sprite at 10 yuan per tin. The Chinese man in the restaurant taught us how to mix Chinese tequilas. It was basically the same method as for traditional tequilas: putting a little erguotou in your glass and mixing it with Sprite.

My Chinese buddies loved it but, to be truthful, it wasn't to my taste.

Where: No 113 Nanluguoxiang
Open: 8am-midnight (restaurant); 24 hours (hotel)
Tel: 6401 3961

Downtown Backpacker Cafe

By Wei Ying

Apart from the youth hostel-style accommodations, the Downtown Backpacker Accommodation has a café, offering a cozy environment with sofas for reading, means to go online, opportunities to chat, enjoy coffee and eat a western-style breakfast.

Although I have low tolerance for any hotel with less than a four-star

rating, as a long-term Beijing resident who hardly gets any vacation time, the Backpacker was a nice place to visit. It gave me a wonderful experience and an introduction to the young and brave hearts who explore the world by backpacking.

Where: No 85 Nanluguoxiang
Open: 10am-2am daily
Tel: 6401 8792



Nine thirty cafe

By Wei Ying

Most cafes on these streets have various themes. The Nine Thirty cafe is no exception and shows a film every night. The cafe owner loves Hong Kong movies. At first, he planned to call his cafe "tangzuo", or "chaodeng" or "Baonishuang", then he realized these names were too Hong Kong-style and customers wouldn't understand. In Hong Kong, most cinemas' movie times are 7:30, 9:30 and 11:30. For this cafe, 7:30 is too early while 11:30 is too late. So the owner picked 9:30 as the movie time, as well as, the name of his restaurant.

He said his fondness for this place was the main reason for opening the Nine Thirty here and he boasts about the quality of his coffee.

Where: No 91 Nanluguoxiang
Open: 11am-midnight
Tel: 6402 9800



Salud Bar

By Wei Ying

On the east side of the street, the bar looks like a wooden house from the outside but it's a loft-style inside.

On my first visit to the Salud Bar, I never imagined its owner to be a British airplane designer. Like most of the cafes and restaurants in this alley, I thought its designer might be some graduate from the Central Academy of Theater, either in the directorial or film department.

My friend said he liked the Salud Bar and thought it was cool. "It was spacious inside and accommodated lots of people," he said. So I guess the guys like its style more than the girls.

There are a lot of photos hanging on the bar's walls, taken by the owners, the waiter said.

Where: No 66, Nanluguoxiang
Open: 3pm-late night, close on Tuesday
Tel: 6402 5086

Continued on page 19 ...

...continued from page 18

Coffee and Bars:

Sandglass Café

Where: No 1 Miao'er Hutong, off Nanluoguxiang
Open: 1pm-1am next day
Tel: 6402 3529

Here Café

Where: 97 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 9am-1am next day
Tel: 8401 4246

Local Time Café

Where: 1 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 2pm-2am next day
Tel: 8405 0349

Sichuangcai and Jiachangcai Restaurant

Where: 25-1 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 10:30am-1:30am next day
Tel: 6407 4124

Alba Coffee

Where: 79, Nanluoguxiang
Open: noon-2am next day
Tel: 6407 3730

The Pottery Shop

Where: 23 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 10am-11pm
Tel: 6401 3799

Salud Bar

Where: 66, Nanluoguxiang
Open: 3pm-last guest leaves
Tel: 6402 5086

Zha Zha Café

Where: 101 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 9:30am-2am the next day
Tel: 8402 4851

Downtown Backpack Café

Where: 85 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 10am-2am the next day
Tel: 6401 8792

Vulcan Bar

Where: 143 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 10am-last guest leaves
Tel: 8404 0561

Nine-Thirty Café

Where: 91 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 11am-midnight
Tel: 6402 9800

Qing Zhu Yuan

Where: 113 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 8am-midnight

Tel: 6401 3961

Cottage

Where: 17-2 Nanluoguxiang
Open: noon-11pm (Mon-Fri), noon-midnight (week-end)
Tel: 8404 0378

Peking Down Town Backpackers Accommodation

Where: 85 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 24 hours for check-in, need reservations
Tel 8400 2429

Fish Nation

Where: 31 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 9:30am-1am the next day
Tel: 6401 3249

PassBy

Where: 108 Nanluoguxiang
Open: 10am-2am
Tel: 8403 8004

Xiao Xin's Café

Where: 103 Nanluoguxiang
Open 9:30am-midnight
Tel: 6403 6956



BEIJING TODAY Beijing Today is available at all locations listed above.

Convenient stores:

Xiao Lu Washing Shop

Where: No 114 Nanluoguxiang

Tian Di Luogu Restaurant

Where: No 104-1 Nanluoguxiang

Wutong Shu manicure and pedicure

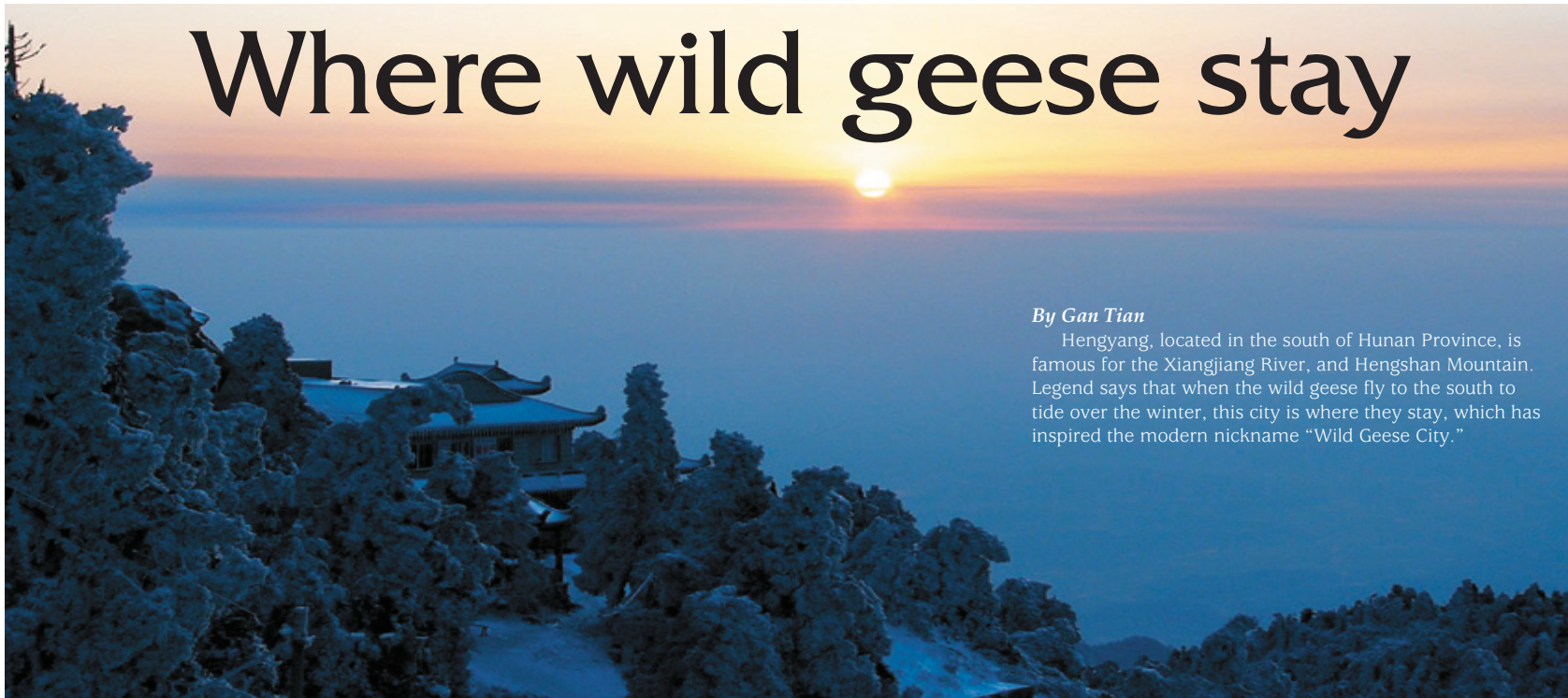
Where: No 113-1 Nanluoguxiang

Ruiqun Fruit Shop

Where: No 111-3 Nanluoguxiang



Where wild geese stay



Enjoy sunrise on the peak of Hengshan Mountain

By Gan Tian

Hengyang, located in the south of Hunan Province, is famous for the Xiangjiang River, and Hengshan Mountain. Legend says that when the wild geese fly to the south to tide over the winter, this city is where they stay, which has inspired the modern nickname "Wild Geese City."

The city, where I grew up, is typical of south China – I would rather call it a "town" than a "city." Though it is the second biggest city in Hunan Province, it still has a quaint and harmonious feel even on the busiest streets.

The town is cut in half by Xiangjiang River, a branch of the Yangtze. The eastern half resembles the countryside of 17th-century England: low buildings, small shopping malls, bicycles, pedestrians and open vegetable markets. Some of the best shopping malls and business streets, Jiefanglu Road and Zhongshan Nan Lu, are located in the western part – that's why they call it the "downtown." Every city has a "downtown," even if it's palm-sized.

I lived in the city for eighteen years. Any place was reachable within a half hour of walking or 20 minutes on a bus. For scenery with a "human touch," check out Shigu Gongyuan, also called Stone Drum Park. If you want to see southern mountains, Hengshan Mountain and Huiyanfeng Peak are the best choices – they both represent southern mountains' winding and delicate style.

Shigu Park

The park is an extremely popular combination of man and nature. Located by the north gate of the city, it is famous for its two stone drums.

Two two-meter-high stones,

shaped like drums, stand atop the mountain, which was noted in well-known writer, Geng Zhongchu's Poems on Watching the Stone, composed in the Jin Dynasty (265-420), "The stones can make sounds, loud enough to shake the sky." During the Tang Dynasty (618-907), many famous scholars came to travel and teach, including Liu Zongyuan, Han Yu, Zhu Xi and Wang Fuzhi. In the Song Dynasty (960-1279), an academy (*shuyuan*) – a place for scholars to research, teach and spread doctrines and for students to read books – was founded at the foot of the mountain.

Though Shigu Shuyuan was destroyed during the war in 1944, a new park was built around the two famous stones. The modern park radiates the feeling of centuries of study that went on before at the same site.

Green is to be seen everywhere, from the grass and the trees to the algae on rocks. Though the mountain is not high, it still attracts visitors for its sun, grassy fields and limestone cliffs. You can also take a look at the writings left behind by many poets and tourists on the stone walls in Chuling Cave down the hill.

Open: 9am-8pm

Cost: 10 yuan

Huiyanfeng Peak

Huiyanfeng, means "Returning Geese Peak," and is



The temple at the foot of Hengshan Mountain

CFP Photo

so named because it is said to be the stop-over of migrating birds from the north.

This is only one of 72 peaks of Hengshan Mountain. The strange thing is, the peak is located almost in downtown. It's very odd to see a plaza full of clothing shops and CD stores at its foot. Many youngsters skateboard and play there in the late afternoon.

Climbing higher will give you a totally different view. There you'll see Buddhist temples where you can hear monks and nuns singing, striking clocks and leaves and trees talking to each other. It's a moment to escape your worries, empty your mind and embrace the calm.

Wangyuetai, the Platform of Watching the Mountain, and Yanfengshi, Goose Peak Temple,

are must-see places. There at the top of the peak.

Open: 9am-8pm

Cost: 20 yuan

Hengshan Mountain

As the southern most of China's five sacred mountains, Hengshan, or Nanyue Mountain, is located in Hengshan County, one and a half hours by bus from Hengyang's downtown. The mountain group, starting from Huiyanfeng and ending at Yue-lufeng in Changsha, has marvelous temples, green forests and fragrant flowers and grass.

You certainly can't see all the nine ponds, nine wells, nine pools, ten caves, 15 rocks, 25 streams and 38 springs in one day. Try to take at least a two-day trip there. Most

people take the Zhurongfeng Peak trip. The peak is the highest point of the mountain.

You can climb halfway up on the morning of the first day and reach the summit by sunset. This way, you won't miss Hengshan's grand, graceful, sequestered and culturally abundant scenery.

Find a hotel near the top of the mountain. Don't forget to haggle over the price. The higher you climb, the higher the cost. You can still get a discount if you drop in with more than three friends, so when you climb the mountain, don't hesitate to talk to strangers and make friends.

At five o'clock the hotel owner will knock on your door to notify you of the coming sunrise. You'll miss the Watching Sunrise Platform if you are even a little late. Many people stay the night just to be in the right spot for the morning. Remember to rent a coat – even in the summer – it is very cold in the early morning.

The sun is the same everywhere, but the feeling is different. Here, around all the temples, you can burn incense and pray for happiness.

Getting there: You can get to Changsha by air, then take the train to Hengyang, an hour and a half trip. You can also take trains numbered K157, K185, K21 and T5.

Cost: 80 yuan for a Hengshan Mountain ticket; 200-300 yuan for hotel; 10-15 yuan to rent a coat

Sofitel Wanda Beijing brings French-style luxury to CBD

Sofitel Wanda Beijing, a new luxury hotel, opened in the CBD last Sunday.

The 27-story hotel has 417 rooms and suites, including 63 Club Sofitel rooms and a dedicated Club Sofitel executive lounge. It boasts a bold interior design that blends the opulence of Tang Dynasty China with modern French style and features.

All rooms feature the latest in window technology – electro-chromic windows, a special feature in Club Rooms, which sep-

arates the bathroom and bedroom and can change from clear to frosted instantly to provide a feeling of spaciousness while offering privacy at the flick of a switch.

Meetings, conference and incentive groups can choose from a total of 10 rooms on the same floor. The exquisite and immense Grand Ballroom can be partitioned into three rooms.

A highlight of Sofitel Wanda Beijing is its collaboration with legendary French gastronomy house, Lenotre. The hotel's sig-

nature Le Pré Lenotre restaurant – inspired by Lenotre's three-Michelin star rated, Le Pré Catelan – brings an exclusive Parisian touch to Beijing's dining scene.

Rates at Sofitel Wanda Beijing start from 1,600 yuan per night. There is also a Special Opening Package where guests can enjoy Club Sofitel benefits when they book a Deluxe Premium Room. The package is available from 1,980 yuan per room per night (single occupancy); 2,180 yuan per room

per night (double occupancy) for a Deluxe Premium Room. Premium guests receive free access to Club Sofitel benefits, including club breakfast, unlimited internet in the Club, soft drinks throughout the day, and two-hour period offering Hors d'oeuvres, cocktails and an open bar daily, as well as a late check out time of 4pm. The offer is valid from August 19 to November 30, and is subject to a 15 percent service charge.

The China International

Exhibition Center, the subway and major tourist attractions such as the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square are easily accessible from the hotel. Beijing Capital International Airport is only 30 minutes away down the airport expressway.

For bookings, contact Accor China Reservations toll free at 800-830 2688 or call 8599 6666. For more information, visit the hotel's website at sofitel.com.

(By Jacqueline Yu)

Glowing, hidden secrets

By Gao Yuejuan

Bratislava is situated in southwest Slovakia, within the Bratislava Region. Its location at the borders of Austria and Hungary makes it the only national capital in the world that borders two countries.

The cityscape of Bratislava, characterized by the Primate's Palace, medieval towers and 20th-century grandiose buildings, has gone through profound changes due to the construction boom since the beginning of the 21st century.

"These tapestries were hidden under the floor for a very long time, until one day, they were discovered in the pipes by people who were repairing the central heating system in 1903." Dagmar Balounova said, as she pointed at six pieces hanging on the wall. "It's quite interesting; they were hidden because people were afraid that they might be taken by Napoleon."

Dagmar is in her 40s; she has worked as a tour guide in Slovakia for years. Outdoor work has darkened her skin and bleached her hair. She lowers her voice as the empty rooms magnify her words.

It is early morning in Bratislava, an old city but new-born capital in the middle of Europe. We arrived at the Primate's Palace, Primacialny Palac, before its opening to avoid other tourists. "The building is in renaissance style and built in the late 1780s. It became famous after Napoleon signed the Treaty of Presbourg in 1805, right here in the Mirror Hall; and now it has turned into a scenic spot," she says. The doors open silently; morning sunshine falls on the wooden floor, which utters a squeaky noise here and there.

"These tapestries were made by the factory of British King James I in 1632; you can easily find the symbol of St George at the right and bottom edge of each tapestry," she said. Dagmar proudly invites me to walk up to the wall and take a closer look. "Can you imagine, if they were to be woven by one person, and he worked eight hours per day and five days per week; it would take him 80 years to finish all of them!"

The tapestry is one of the most pervasive works of art throughout historical Europe and elsewhere. Many churches and cathedrals have a number of ornate tapestries depicting religious scenes, and kings and nobility would often commission a tapestry to tell the story of a great battle or event. A tapestry is a woven image which may use any number of textiles and may come in a wide range of sizes. Generally, a tapestry refers to a wall-hanging which depicts a scene, but the term may also

be used in conjunction with other textiles to indicate that a tapestry scene is woven onto an item.

The six tapestries in the Primate's Palace of Bratislava were woven by threads made of 70 percent cotton and 30 percent silk; the threads were dyed with herbal colors some 300 years ago. They are still in good condition, and each of the six pieces tells its own part of a Greek myth. The figures are in a dramatic scene as evidenced by their gestures and facial expressions.

"It is a love story that ends sadly," Dagmar said. "Hero, a priestess of Aphrodite who dwelt in a tower in Sestos, fell in love with Leander, a young man from Abydos on the other side of the strait." They met during an event and Cupid flew above them with his famous bow. On the second tapestry, Leander is swimming across the strait to meet Hero, without even noticing his sister on the bank is calling him back.

"When he arrives, shown in the third tapestry, a maid is calling Hero. In the fourth piece, Leander insists on swimming across the ocean although clouds cover the moon and his sister is requesting him not to; and Cupid says, 'I will lead his way with this torch,' she continues.

"Sadly, the waves extinguish Cupid's torch; Leander drowns in the ocean. He is found dead by the shore when Apollo and his golden carriage fly across the sky; Hero, brokenhearted, throws herself into the ocean. On the last tapestry, Cupid sits sadly by the coast," she said.

Open: Tuesday to Sunday, 10am-5pm

Cost: 12.2 yuan



The tapestries in the Primate's Palace

Photos by Qiu Yanqing

Other things to see in Bratislava

Old Town, Stare Mesto

It is a quiet and peaceful area where you will see very ancient constructions including the Slovak National Theatre, Slovenské národné divadlo, and St Martin's Cathedral, Dóm sv Martina. It is said that when you look up at the top of St Martin's Cathedral, instead of a cross, you will see a crown.

Main Square, Hlavné námestie

Here you can find the oldest church built in 1297 – the Franciscan Church, Frantiskánsky kostol – and the Church of the Holy Saviour, which was built in the 17th century.

Bratislava Castle, Bratislavský hrad

The castle burned down in 1811 and remained in ruins until 1953 when a massive reconstruction effort was started. From 1956 -

1968, the castle was reconstructed in its 18th century image. It is an important museum and popular tourist attraction with an excellent view of the town. The rooftop offers a splendid view, and there are several museums inside the castle including a Historical Museum, Museum of Folk Music and Slovak National Museum.

Getting there: Bratislava castle is in the old town above the Danube River. The castle is a dominant building in the town and cannot be missed. Paid parking is available throughout the city.

Open: In the summer season, April 1 - September 30, the castle area is open from 9am to 9:30pm. In winter, it closes at 6pm.

Cost: 24.4 yuan

Lufthansa First Class Lounge now also at Munich Airport

A new dimension in travel is opening up at Lufthansa's hub in Southern Germany. Starting August 14, First Class customers and HON Circle members will be able to enjoy the exclusive atmosphere of a Lufthansa First Class Lounge at Munich Airport.

As at Frankfurt, the First Class Lounge at Munich offers a range of comfortable facilities and conveniences. These include a gourmet restaurant, a bar area, a

cigar lounge and luxury bathroom areas. Access to and from the lounge is possible via Level 4 (EU Departures), as well as, via Level 5 (Non-EU Departures), for premium customers at Munich.

As exclusive passport control and security checkpoints are located within the lounge, passengers - whether arriving or departing - can change levels directly.

The First Class Lounge extends over two levels. On the

lower lounge level (Level 04), there is the lobby and service area for the limousine transfer. If a flight is leaving from an apron position, passengers will be collected at the lounge and chauffeur driven directly.

On the upper level of the lounge (Level 05), passengers can relax or enjoy their time until flight departure. Separate workrooms provide an inviting environment for passengers to

prepare for their next meeting. In the exclusive bathroom area, guests can unwind and freshen up before or after a long journey.

In the First Class Lounge there is also a bar area and a restaurant, where LSG Sky Chefs cooks spoil guests with a variety of culinary delicacies such as the sushi selection, which changes daily, regional organic produce and international specialties.

Before entering the lounge, First Class passengers and HON Circle members can use other service facilities, including a valet parking service, separate check-in facilities and fast lanes at the central security checkpoints.

With the opening of the new First Class Lounge, Lufthansa customers will have a choice of five lounges at Munich.

(By Jacqueline Yu)



The poster features a collage of tennis players in action against a background of traditional Chinese cloud patterns. The players shown are Tommy Robredo, Nikolay Davydenko, Marcos Baghdatis, Li Na (李娜), Amelie Mauresmo, Martina Hingis, and Ivan Ljubicic. The ATP and Sony Ericsson WTA Tour logos are in the top right corner.

CHINA OPEN

Tommy Robredo

Nikolay Davydenko

Marcos Baghdatis

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Chinglish story

When one of Beijing Today's copy editors, Derrick Sobodash, read my introduction to Sanlitun, he quickly noted that I'm not an avid drinker. For non-drinkers, his e-mail might prove useful for other abstainers, so I decided to share it. If you have any other good Chinglish stories, please send to gantian@ynet.com.

Wine or alcohol?

By Derrick Sobodash

Perusing the Sanlitun pages, I learned that Gan Tian needed to know a bit about "wine." My extensive college drinking days gave me the background needed to make it through his story.

Don't make the mistake of translating the Chinese word *jiu* as "wine." It is "alcohol."

When talking about types of beverage alcohol, beer, wine and liquor all have three things in common: they all begin with yeast poop. Alcohol is produced when yeasts, a kind of bacteria, sick their sweet teeth into some source of sugar, a process called fermentation.

The similarities end there. Like humans, yeast cannot

live in a pile of their own poop for too long or they perish. The point where the yeast dies and alcohol stops being produced determines what percent of their liquid home ends up alcohol.

Liquors, like vodka, rum and local favorite Red Star Erguotou, are produced by boiling the alcohol out of the mix, a process called distillation. This is watered down and imbued with the flavorings and fragrances that make it the choice of America's under-age drinkers.

Wine and beer are fermented only, and never go through the distillation process. They are a finished product after the alcohol dies and the aging process ends. This is why, while most liquors

are 35 to 55 percent, wines and beers are typically quite low.

Alcohols can be produced from grains, fruits and vegetables. The potato gives us vodka. Depending on whether or not the source travels the fermented or distilled path, it ends up with different names. Barley is used to make beer, which becomes Scotch whiskey when distilled. Rice is fermented to make *huangjiu*, which, distilled, gives you *mibaijiu*. There aren't many notable sorghum drinks, but maotai, gaoliang and various *baijiu* begin with that grain.

Wine is made when you feed grapes to the yeast, and when it's distilled, you end up with brandy. Sugarcane can be fermented to make basi, popular in the Philippines, or the more widely-known Caribbean rum.

Various other sources can be used, like dandelions, honey or milk, which are fermented to make the Mongolian kumis, known locally as *naijiu*.

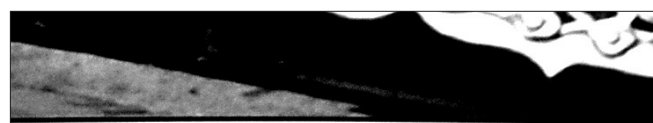
So, there you go. Next time, you can return to Sanlitun fully-armed with the knowledge you need to make it an unforgettable night – unless of course you black out. Remember, real friends hold each other's hair back while they vomit.



CFP Photo

Chinglish on the way

This column aims to identify Chinglish in public areas. If you see any Chinglish signs, please take a picture and send it to gantian@ynet.com together with your name and address.



Plague of the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests

Plague hall

By Derrick Sobodash

One wrong word can have devastating effects for a message: case in point, Tiantan Park signs. Unless of course they are really exhibiting ancient Chinese biological weapons.

According to this sign, on exhibit is the "Plague of the Hall of Prayer for Good Harvests." Sadly, the Chinese didn't make it into this picture, so this week, "Chinglish on the Way" is left to stab in the dark about what this may have meant.

A "plague" is defined as a "widespread affliction or calamity," and is usually used to refer to some incredibly infectious, usually fatal, pandemic. In English, the word "plague" alone is most associated with the bubonic plague which decimated 30 to 60 percent of Europe's population over four centuries.

What kind of dangers are hidden behind that show glass in Tiantan?

Most of the original image is lost, but it looks like this was the caption to one of those black and white prints that are displayed on the walls beside the glass. So what could "plague" be? That's a good question, and without the picture, it's impossible to answer.

To try and get to the root, plug "plague" into Kingsoft's PowerWord – choice dictionary

of Chinglish inventor. The first two words it returns are plague related, but the last two, *mafan* and *zaihuo*, are a bit more murky. It could suggest this picture is of a disaster which befell the hall, or a period of turmoil.

Without the picture we're stabbing in the dark. This could even be a typo. Maybe the translator meant to write "plaque," like this is a photo of a stone memorial once hung on the wall.

Expecting someone to deduce all this from the English when viewing the sign is just cruel, and there are probably more exhibits than this lost on tourists due to mangled translations.

Let's recap.

Possibility one is that the above picture is people excreting their liquefied organs, which means the caption is correct, though it could be clarified as, "Plague which struck the Hall of Harvest Prayers." Otherwise this is a photo of some disaster, in which case you can swap "disaster" in place of "plague" in the last line. Option three is this is a typo, and depicted is a memorial of some sort, which would be captioned, "Memorial plaque from the Hall of Harvest Prayers."

In the end, the reader is left to pick his own poison.

Local professor: Shida Zhu**1. To step-up monitoring of capital flow**

It is perfectly alright to say "step up," meaning enhancing efforts to monitor capital flow. When you say "step-up" it is the noun form of "to step up." So, it is wrong to use the noun form of "step-up" as a verb. Similarly, is the way to say "to set-up." You have to say "to set up." For instance, a sentence like this, "Nasdaq plans to setup a Beijing office," is incorrect. You can see that tiny points can spoil your English.

2. In the remained two years of the Bush administration

Can you find what is wrong with this sentence? Everything in it apparently looks perfect, but, there is an error that is difficult to notice. The verb "remain" is an intransitive verb. It means two years that remain. So, you will have to say, "In

the remaining two years of the Bush administration."

3. As early as the first half of 2008

The phrase "as early as" should be followed by the word "in." So, you have to say "As early as in the first half of 2008." Similarly, you will not say "as early as 2008," but "as early as in 2008."

4. The newly release of the book

The writer is confused with the functions of words. "Release" here is a noun. So, the attributive form should be "new" instead of "newly." It should read, "The new release of the book." In English, when nouns are suffixed with "-ly" they become adjectives. For instance, manly or womanly with "-ly" added, become adverbs. In our initial phrase, you may say "the newly released book."

Blacklist

Blacklist has something new this issue. We invited our professor Shida Zhu and Canadian copy editor Joe Edwards to point out the mistakes within the same mistakes, so that you can see different points of view on one mistake, both academically and functionally. Remember, further responses can go to gantian@ynet.com.

Native speaker: Joe Edwards**1. To step-up monitoring of capital flow**

It's okay to say "step up," meaning to improve. "Step-up," with a hyphen, is the noun form of "to step up" and can't be used as a verb. A similar situation occurs with the term, "to set-up." With the hyphen in place, it's a noun and without, it's a verb. This sentence is incorrect, "Nasdaq plans to set-up a Beijing office." You must use the verb in its verbal form, which is "set up." Small points like these can spoil your English.

2. In the remained two years of the Bush administration

What is wrong here? There's a tiny error that is hard to detect. The verb "remain" is in transitive form meaning two years remain. Easy to correct by removing the "-ed" from the end of remained and replacing it with "-ing" to read "remaining two years."

3. As early as the first half of 2008

The phrase, "as early as," must be followed by the word, "in" to correct its grammatical structure. It should read, "As early as in the first half of 2008." Similarly, the phrase should read, "as early as in 2008."

4. The newly release of the book

In the sentence, the word "release" is a noun and should be preceded by an adjective so "newly" must be written as "new." It then reads "the new release of the book," which is correct. Also, nouns suffixed with an "-ly" become adjectives. For example, manly, or womanly. Add "-ly" to an adjective and it becomes an adverb. New becomes "newly" and the sentence would read, "The newly released book." Note the necessary addition the letter "d" to release, in this case.



SPORTS ARENA

WEEKLY!
"POOL TOURNEY"
TIME: EVERY WEDNESDAY 8 PM

CHAO YANG PARK EAST GUAN HU GARDEN TOWER #1



朝阳公园桥东路北观湖国际大厦写字楼 | 号首层

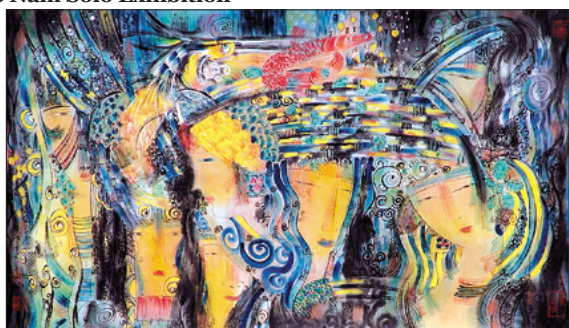


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Friday, August 24

Exhibition

Ko Nam Solo Exhibition



Ko Nam, born in China in 1963, lost his hearing due to a childhood sickness. His skills range from paintings of varied mountain scenes and countryside to the forest. His paintings of modern young ladies are characterized as being passionate and optimistic.

Where: Wan Fung Art Gallery, No 136 Nanchizi Dajie, Dongcheng
 When: Daily 10am-6pm, until September 2
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 6523 3319, 6523 3320

Age of Big Construction – Han Bing Solo Exhibition

Where: Gao Brothers Beijing Art Center, 798 Art Factory, Dashanzi Art District, Chaoyang
 When: Tue-Sun 11am-7pm, until September 18
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 8459 9577

Movie

The Story of Ermei

A convincing portrait of rural China presents some dark humor. A woman struggles to find a life of her own as circumstances conspire against her in this drama set in Yunnan.
 Where: Cherry Lane Movies, inside Kent

Center, Anjialou, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang
 When: 8pm
 Admission: 50 yuan
 Tel: 139 0113 4745



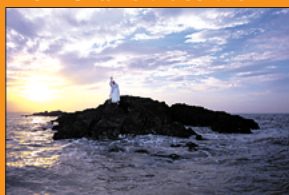
Saturday, August 25

Exhibition
Material Metaphor – Group Sculptures Exhibition

It features artists including Wu Zhen, Lu Qiongwen, Miao Weiwei.

Where: 3+3 Art Space, No 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang
 When: Daily 10am-6pm, until October 3
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 6437 9942

Water Division – Jin Shan's Video Work



Jin Shan's *Water Division* tells the story of an encounter between a drowned body in a papal costume and a lone wanderer. Superficially, the piece seems to be simply a brief description of an incident, but the extreme nature of the two characters creates an intense and darkly humorous narrative.

Where: Platform China 798 Project Space, No 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang
 When: Tue-Sun 10am-6pm, until October 7
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 6432 0091, 6432 0169

Music
Live music party featuring bands like Black Cat Bone, All Treasure and Ziyo

Where: 2 Kolegas Bar, inside the drive-in movie theater park, No 21 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang
 When: 5pm
 Admission: 50 yuan
 Tel: 8196 4820

Outdoor
Day trip: Vineyard & Wine-tasting in Hebei

Go to Huailai to visit the Sino-French Chateau, one of the best vineyards in China. You'll enjoy a tour of the winery where you'll see wine-making processes, and learn the difference between various types of wine grapes in the vineyard. Then, you get to sample 4 types of expensive wines in the Brewing Plant.

Where: Situated 130 kilometers to the northwest of Beijing, Huailai boasts the best soil and climate for grape planting.

When: Meet at the Chinese Culture Club (Kent Center, No 29, Anjialou, Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang) at 10am and return at 5pm.

Cost: 250 yuan (includes transportation, wine-tasting, and lunch)

Tel: 6432 9341, 6432 1041



Sunday, August 26

Exhibition
Wang Peng Solo Exhibition

Where: TRA Gallery, Beihuqu, Beiyuan Anwai, Chaoyang
 When: Daily 11am-6:30 pm, until September 17
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 5202 3883



Admission: Free
 Tel: 6438 5747

Italian Artist Marco Del Re Solo Exhibition

Marco Del Re combines in his etchings a blend of modern and historic art. He plays with colors to harmonize or challenge the shade of the natural paper. He sometimes uses the same theme on different paper: Japanese or Tibetan paper, Arches paper, or even Roma paper.

Where: Yan Club Arts Center, No 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang
 When: Daily 11am-6pm, until September 24
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 8457 3506



Summer Group Exhibition

The exhibition features abstract works by Tan Ping, Wang Guangle, Xu Hongming, Zhou Yangming, Chen Ruobing, Zhang Fan, Lin Yan and Tang Kaizhi.

Where: Onemoon Contemporary Art, Ditan Park, Andingmen Wai, Dongcheng
 When: Tue-Sun 10am-6pm, until September 20
 Admission: Free
 Tel: 6427 7748

Laurens Tan Solo Exhibition
 Where: Imagine Gallery, No 8 Feijiacun Yishu Gongzuoshi, Laiguangying Dong Lu, Chaoyang
 When: Tue-Sun 10:30am-5:30pm, until September 23

Stage in September

Music

Rock'n'roll Banquet – 2007 Beijing Popular Music Festival

Who: The Lord Beats an Entertainer, Cui Jian, Suede, Nine Inch Nails and The Ramones.

Where: Chaoyang Park, No 1 Nongzhan Nan Lu, Chaoyang
 When: September 8-9
 Admission: 200-380 yuan

Swing and Jazz

Who: Savoy Dance Orchestra
 Where: The Star Live, No 79 Heping Xi Jie, Dongcheng
 When: 8:30pm, September 13

Admission: 100-150 yuan

Opening Concert of the Tenth Peking Special Works – International Music Section: Beethovens' Works

Who: Lang Lang and German National Orchestra, Berlin

Where: Poly Theatre, No 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Chaoyang
 When: 7:30pm, September 21
 Admission: 180-980 yuan

Dance

Multi-media modern dance The Goddess of Mercy

Who: Beijing Modern Dance Company
 Where: Peking University Hall, inside Peking University, Haidian

When: 7:30pm, September 13-14
 Admission: 60-880 yuan (20yuan for student)

Pina Bausch and Tanztheater Wuppertal live in Beijing

Who: Pina Bausch and Tanztheater Wuppertal
 Where: Tianqiao Theatre, No 21 Tianqiao Beiwei Lu, Chongwen

When: 7:30pm, September 20-23
 Admission: 180-1,280 yuan

Dancing Queen

Who: Spirit of the Dance Productions (Ireland)
 Where: Beijing Exhibition Theater, No 135 Xizhimen Wai Dajie, Xicheng

When: 7:30pm, September 21-22
 Admission: 180-1,000 yuan

Drama

Chinese Musical "Butterflies"

This is a tragedy similar to *Tragic World*. It tells a tale of life and death intertwined with true love between a man and two women. A flowing and lively story, graceful and fluent music, poetic and psychedelic stage language and a show-stopping climax make this a brand new twist on the musical genre. Liang Shanbo and Zhu Yingtai, a couple from classic legend, are reborn in the story of "Becoming a Butterfly." The show tells a Chinese story using western music and dance forms.

Who: Siqin Gaowa, Shi Ke, Wang Lihong and Li Wen
 Where: Poly Theatre, No 14 Dongzhimen Nan Dajie, Chaoyang
 When: 7:30pm, September 11-20
 Admission: 180-1,200 yuan

(By Qiu Jiaoning)